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THE METHOD IN THE MADNESS

A FRESH CONSIDERATION OF THE CASE BETWEEN GERMANY AND OURSELVES

BY

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NOTE

I HAVE to thank *The Times* for kindly allowing me to reprint in this book some passages of an article contributed to the *Literary Supplement* (November 4, 1915), and also the editor of the *Nineteenth Century and After*, who has given me courteous permission to incorporate passages from two articles of mine published in September and in December, 1916.

An expression of my gratitude is also due to my friend Mr. L. B. Namier, who read through the proofs of this book and made various valuable suggestions and criticisms, of which I took advantage.

E. B.

May, 1917.

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ERRATA.

Page 15, last line, *for* "directon" *read* "direction."

Page 71, footnote, *for* "had undergone a change between the date of the two articles" *read* "had undergone a change during the three years."

Page 97, line 13, and page 118, line 19, *for* "Backmeister" *read* "Bacmeister."

Page 142, line 15, *for* "Politik in Neuen" *read* "Politik im Neuen."

people in countries already at war with Germany would act more strongly, whether fighting at the front as soldiers or doing their part at home, the more clearly they saw what they were fighting for;

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INTRODUCTION

All the time that the war of bayonets and shells has been going on, a war of words has also been going on between the belligerent countries. In England a crowd of writers have been busy demonstrating by argument the justice of our cause, and no doubt we were right in feeling that the defence of our cause in words was a real contribution to victory. In arguing we had in view two sorts of public—on the one hand, the people in our own country and the other countries already at war with Germany; on the other hand, the people in countries which stand outside the conflict. It was plain that in both cases, if our arguments carried conviction, victory would have been brought nearer. The people in countries already at war with Germany would act more strongly, whether fighting at the front as soldiers or doing their part at home, the more clearly they saw what they were fighting for;

and the people in neutral countries, if they were brought to understand our cause, would give us a support which was not without substantial practical consequences. There is, therefore, every reason why both sides in this conflict have been concerned to prove both to their own peoples and to the outside world that their cause is a good one. And now the part of the world left neutral seems a little remnant indeed compared with the immense conglomeration of the inhabitants of the globe against Germany.

Controversy is an indispensable part of such a struggle as that in which we are engaged. But we must recognize that such controversy is not a particularly delicate instrument for getting at the truth. Even where people argue intensely about some purely theoretical point, the view of each side is liable to be obscured by passion, and here we are not arguing about a purely theoretical point, but about something which affects our nation vitally, which stirs up a whole world of feeling, noble and base. The controversy is largely carried on in the press, and leads to that hastiness and crudeness of treatment which the conditions of journalistic work make often inevitable. In this way, our statement of our controversy with Germany, our representation of ourselves, our representation of the enemy, can hardly, with the best will in the world to be honest, be kept from a certain amount of inaccu-

racy and distortion. Two evils spring from this state of things.

First, it tends to blunt and coarsen our sense of truth. Those who write and speak of things connected with the war are obliged to do so with their thought continually directed, not only to the truth, but to the practical effects their words may produce on four different audiences—the home public, allied peoples, neutral peoples, and the enemy. Every honest person avoids making statements definitely untrue, but even an honest person to-day will not think it wise to enunciate all that he sees or believes. He will select for his public utterance the bits of truth to which he thinks it useful that attention should be drawn, or distribute the emphasis with a view to produce a certain effect. This cannot be helped under the present stress, and is not blameworthy—it is the case with ourselves just as much as with our enemies—but it is a state of things which puts an increasingly painful constraint, as it lasts longer, upon one of our natural interests. For man is so constituted that, apart from his interest in this or that practical end, he has an interest in knowing what is true for truth's sake. Supposing, for instance, anyone has been engaged in historical study, the interest and excitement in the face of each complex of events is just to reconstruct the truth by means of the imperfect or distorting records, to estimate things in their just proportions—where it

is the case of analyzing the mind of an individual or a people, to discriminate finer shades, to get things right to a nicety. Even at the best of times it is only too easy for the delicate edge to be taken off this feeling by other desires, and when, for month after month, we have had to maintain the mental attitude described, it may well be, unless we are on our guard, to our spiritual hurt.

This is one of the evils; but if this were the only one, someone might say that the supreme necessity of winning the war compelled us to accept this spiritual hurt as part of the cost. But the other evil which springs from inaccuracy and distortion actually impedes our course to victory. For there are always amongst us people who want to prevent us pushing the war to a conclusion, who seize every opportunity of representing the enemy's case in a favourable light, and all carelessness of statement on our part in regard to what the enemy desires or what the enemy has done, makes it easier for them to discredit our indictment. So, too, with regard to neutrals, it is not the most sweeping and wholesale accusation of the Germans which is necessarily the most effective. Whenever the Germans are able to show the neutrals that we have misrepresented them in any respect, they succeed in damaging our whole cause.

If, therefore, even in a heated polemical atmosphere, one tries to see things in their true shape and

proportions and describe what one sees, one is not necessarily that particularly unlovely kind of person —the detached intellectual onlooker, who thinks himself a superior being, because the emotions which run through his people leave him cold. It is good, not only from the intellectual, but from the practical, standpoint to see things as they really are. This must be my defence if in these pages I try, in this or that particular, to correct what appear to me to be inexactitudes in prevalent views of Germany, to look at Germany just as it might be looked at by someone who stood outside the hurly-burly, with the desire, not to score points, but to say what I seem to see. I do not think that this need be taken to show indifference to the practical urgency of the hour.

CHAPTER I

GERMANY'S MIND BEFORE THE WAR

In our public controversy we are continually making general statements about "the Germans"—that the Germans desire this, or intend that, or hold such ideas. To make such general statements is a necessity; often they may be approximately true; but they are a snare. We ought to remind ourselves often that our term "the Germans" covers a great multitude of human individuals whose purposes and thoughts and characters are infinitely diverse, often mutually antagonistic. It is the want of caution in the use of such generalizations which makes many of the German statements about "the English" look so foolish when confronted with the living reality. There are people on our side who seem to think of the German nation as animated by a single soul. The picture in their minds seems to be that of a certain number of Germans slaughtering women and children, and all the rest of the German nation looking on, as in an amphitheatre, witnessing precisely what is done and applauding. If, on the other hand, you try to convince them that there are

quantities of Germans who are good and humane, they think you want to show that the public action of Germany has been good and humane, and that therefore we ought not to go on with the war.

It is often affirmed on our side that Germany was the aggressor in this war. I think it can be demonstrated that the public action of the Central Powers for a considerable period has been such that all the other Great Powers of the world have been compelled to take up arms in self-defence. It is the public action of Germany—and especially Germany's public action during the critical Twelve Days of 1914—which justifies our fighting. It may therefore appear that to say that Germany began this war because Germany wanted it gives the essential part of the truth, the part which matters for our action, and we need not bother about anything further. This I believe to be a mistake. It is fairly certain that to the majority of individuals in Germany, during the first half of 1914, the idea of Germany's being involved in a European war would have been hugely repugnant—certainly to the great majority of the working class. Each of these individually knows that he did not want the war before it came, he knows that his friends did not want it; and then suddenly it came, and he and his friends had in one way or another to bear the burden of it. One can understand, as a matter of psychology, that it is difficult for all these individuals to

feel the war as something they willed, not as something forced upon them. And if we use our statement, that Germany was the aggressor, in a loose way, which may seem to imply that the Germans individually wanted to go to war, our statement, reported in Germany, seems a wicked lie. This, of course, does not matter so much, because there is no chance any way of convincing the Germans of the strength of our case till we have beaten their armies in the field. But so far as the opinion of the world at large is of value to us, what seems a misstatement on our side does us harm. People in many countries are quite rightly convinced that the particular Germans they know did not want the war, and their German friends probably assure them in perfect good faith that the war was not generally wanted in Germany, and this seems to them to refute our statement. Our statement, true in its original intention, has been taken—perhaps partly through our careless use of it—to mean something which is not true.

These charges, let us be clear, are not made against Germany out of the blue; they are made in the other countries with whom Great Britain is allied; they are made by a large number of writers and speakers in neutral countries — in Switzerland, Holland, the Scandinavian countries, Spain. The German statements collected to prove these charges form a very considerable volume. One may refer to the

Swiss Professor O. Nippold's little book published before the war, "Der deutsche Chauvinismus," or to the Danish Professor J. P. Bang's "Hurrah and Hallelujah" (of which an English translation has been recently published); or to Mr. Alexander Gray's three pamphlets, "The Upright Sheaf," "The New Leviathan," and "True Pastime,"* for collections of German utterances proving the aggressive and arrogant temper of Germany. There the documents are. Their authenticity is not disputed. What do Germans say to them—German divines, German professors, German publicists? Well, so far as one can judge by German publications during the war, German divines, as a rule, just refuse to look at them; they have worked themselves up into too vehement a passion, under the illusion that they are Ezekiels denouncing the British Tyre, to have eyes for anything they do not want to see. A few German writers are frank. Maximilian Harden, for instance. But then Harden, like Bernard Shaw, has especially made it his rôle to strike through popular falsehoods with uncomfortable verities, and is a wayward figure in German journalism. Theodor Wolff, in the paper he edits, the *Berliner Tageblatt*, insists from time to time that the enmity against Germany has been caused in part by the violent carriage of Germans; almost two years ago I remember reading an article by him, in which he

* Methuen and Co.

referred to Professor Nippold's book as putting before the German people a factor in the situation of which it must take honest account. But, again, it must be remembered, if in Theodor Wolff one finds intelligence piercing the thick Teutonic fogs, that he too, like Harden, is a Jew.

When other writers, representing the solid bulk of the German educated middle class—of "Moderate" opinion, whether religious or secular—refer to the utterances of Germans brought up against them by the enemy, it is, as a rule, to complain that the extravagant expressions of a few individuals are taken as typical of German opinion and feeling. Such collections, indeed, as that of Professor Nippold or that of Professor Bang come perhaps hardly within the ordinary German writer's field of vision, but all Germans have heard of the trio—Treitschke, Nietzsche, Bernhardi—constituted by the hostile press, and know how it has been worked against them. They refer especially to this to show how undiscriminating foreigners are in throwing together the figures which they take as representative. The blunders committed by the Germans in reference to England should put us on our guard. It is a fairly simple matter for a foreigner to prove that such and such an utterance has been made in a country, but to "place" the utterance—to know exactly what its worth is for the people of the country, for how much it counts, what degree of allowance must be

made for personal idiosyncrasy or an element of playfulness or reference to some particular set of circumstances in the social environment—that for a foreigner is very hard indeed. Think, for instance, of the way the Germans take Oscar Wilde or Bernard Shaw !

With regard to the particular trio—Treitschke, Nietzsche, Bernhardi—one must allow it has a certain obvious incongruity: a great historian of prophetic earnestness, a wilful and fascinating man of letters, and a writer on military affairs with a vogue limited to certain circles—as if one were to associate Carlyle, Bernard Shaw, and Spencer Wilkinson as representative of the mind of England. And yet, on the other hand, Germans may be reminded that a strong family resemblance is often visible to a stranger when to members of the family the individuals in question seem wholly unlike.

It is admitted that the utterances collected by Professor Nippold and others represent the mind of one section, at any rate, of the German people. No one in Germany can deny the existence of Pan-Germanism, of the *Alldeutsche Verband*. But neither, I think, can anyone who reads what has been written in Germany during the war, deny that the majority of the German people stand outside the Pan-German circles—not uninfluenced by them, perhaps, but outside them. Now, it appears to me that the important thing is to take account, not in

the first instance of the most extreme and foolish and arrogant German opinion, but of the opinion of the best men, the most moderate and reasonable and righteous. Even if one were not moved to this by the desire to find across the chasms which have come to sever our friendship, something on the other side with which we might ultimately begin to re-establish those relations which ought to prevail between members of the human family—even if we were not moved by any higher desire, it is well for us to know where the strength of our enemy of to-day lies. Even in the case of an evil cause, its strength lies in what is best in it. The Germans would not be so formidable if there were not good Germans as well as bad ones. It is when good men give their support to a bad cause that a bad cause is most powerful. For good men do in this world not seldom give their support to a bad cause, telling themselves resolutely that it is a good one.

No doubt there has been in Germany a tendency to glorify war in itself, to dwell upon certain fine things involved in war—self-sacrifice, courage, endurance—to exalt its effects upon national character. One cannot say that this kind of glorification of war is confined to the Germans. It is found to some extent in the war-songs of all nations, from Homer and Tyrtæus onwards. But in the Germans the tendency has been greater and more prominent than among any other European people. The degree to

which the worship of the Sword, of War as such, is carried in such poetry as that of Arndt, is characteristically German, and, as we shall see, the question of degree may be the crucial one in many matters. Germans may defend it as an admirable quality in the German people that they are *waffenfroh* to this degree. As a matter of fact, it is probably not true of the German common soldier that he has any natural enjoyment of fighting. It was, we may believe, rather those minds who were affected by caste tradition, such as the Prussian Junkers, or by continued literary suggestion, such as numbers of the book-educated, to which the imagination of war was pleasant. But, whether the quality is admirable or not, they have not, I think, any right to be surprised if foreigners believe that to many minds formed under such influences the idea of war had come to be attractive. It would be less so, no doubt, to those engaged in civil business, to whom, whatever the poets might sing, the risks and pains of war would be sensibly present, than to those who occupied high places in the great military machine, for whom war might mean excitement and glory. The ominous thing is that those who occupied high places in the military machine largely represented those very Prussian aristocratic families whose desires counted for a great deal in the highest places of the State. Even in reference to these, the question whether they " wanted war " is

not so simple a one as it seems at first sight. For every sane person war must bring enormous evils. A sane person may at the same time regard war as a means to secure certain desirable things. If the desirable things could be secured without the evils, no sane person would ever resolve on war. In this life any particular thing we want implies a complex of manifold elements—a mass of implications and consequences. Often some of the elements of a complex may have strong repulsion for us, while the complex as a whole, with all its implications and consequences, attracts us. In a way, we do not desire it, and yet we do desire it on the whole. In this sense it may be true to say that many people of influence in Germany desired war and dwelt in the imagination of war, whilst it may be equally true to say that even the most martial military chief in Germany, if he had had put before him the choice of saying Yes or No to a war which would not gain for Germany anything Germany might not acquire by peaceful means, would have said No. It is unlikely that any German militarist would have advocated going to war *simply* to test the military machine or *simply* to provide a moral gymnastic for the nation. In this sense German apologists probably say with truth that no one in Germany desired war. But in establishing this they have not, one may suggest, established very much. Because what we mean when we say that Germans desired war is that they

desired certain things and regarded war as the necessary condition of their acquisition—that they willed beforehand the whole complex of which war formed a part.

In the case of the military caste, the attraction of war would not consist only in its promise of excitement or fame. It is psychologically inevitable that anyone whose thoughts are continually given to the elaboration and perfecting of some machine for a definite purpose must come to have an intense interest in the testing of the machine's capacities by practical experiment. Will it really work? The desire expressed by the Crown Prince in his much-quoted phrase with regard to manœuvres—"If only it were the real thing!"—is one which at moments may have occurred to Englishmen or Frenchmen who were keen soldiers. The German military machine in 1914 was the most perfect thing of its kind which the world had ever seen. It was inevitable that those who had laboured at the making of it, or felt pride in its perfection, should wonder what it would accomplish if it were actually put to the proof—should want to see.

It is probably true that the bulk of the German people believed that it would be possible to secure their national well-being without war. But the fact that the class which furnished the army leaders, and which had especial influence upon the supreme directon of the Empire, had been bred up to a

temper for which war appeared in strongly attractive colours, constituted the danger for Europe. Even if none of them would have willed war, unless there were some ulterior reason for going to war, it meant that whenever an ulterior reason presented itself, there would be a peculiar readiness to head for war. This is what we mean when we talk about German militarism. Germans sometimes rebut the charge by asking with outraged innocence whether a strong army was not a necessity for Germany, whether in France, too, there was not an obligation on all men to serve in the forces of the State, whether England has not become militarist by introducing universal service; but this is evading the point. Militarism in the sense intended does not mean that a State has a large army or a powerful army; it means that the military temper is displayed outside its proper sphere within the State—in the brutal treatment, for instance, of the civil population, as at Zabern; it means that the military chiefs exercise an undue influence upon the supreme direction of the State. It is not so easy for the Germans to rebut the charge of "militarism" in this sense. Some writers affect not to know what foreigners mean when they speak about it. Professor Schücking, of Marburg, in the *Forum* (May, 1915) comments adversely upon his countrymen's want of candour in this matter. Instead of saying what really might truthfully be said against the

charge of "militarism," "over three thousand German professors," he writes, "gaily and confidently declare that in Germany there is no militarism at all!"

A State whose central direction is subject to such influences is an uncomfortable neighbour. When the brain which directs an individual organism is influenced by alcohol, the man is apt to use his limbs in a violent way by which those near him, especially if he is a man of powerful build, may be seriously injured. If he is one of a company, the others in self-defence are likely to put forcible restraint upon him till such time as the maddening fumes may have evaporated. That is what a League of Nations is now doing to Germany. German militarism will be crushed, either when Germany's power to harm is overborne by greater power, or when the spirit which inflames the directing brain of the German State has passed away.

Both in Germany and abroad the most ambitious and bellicose sections of German society are commonly described as *Alldeutsche*, Pan-Germans. The name is in some ways misleading. It seems in form to correspond with Pan-Slav, which suggests a movement to establish more active common feeling and political co-operation among the different peoples of Slavonic speech and traditions. A true Pan-Slav movement would not imply any ambition to subjugate non-Slavonic peoples. In the same

way the term Pan-German might seem to imply, not any far-reaching desires for power outside the limits of the German race, but simply a desire to link up the German race wherever it is settled all over Europe. Indeed, a Pan-Germanism of this kind would correspond with such an ambition as is expressed in Arndt's poem "Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?" Every verse, asking whether the German's Fatherland is some particular German region—Prussia, Swabia, etc.—ends with the answer, "Oh no, no; the German's Fatherland must be larger than that." But according to the concluding verse, what the poet has here in his mind is not any indefinite extension of Germanism over the earth: his final answer is that the German Fatherland includes all countries whose language is German.

It is true that even in the earlier part of the last century much more far-reaching ambitions than this were entertained by Arndt himself and other German writers.* And when at the end of the century the term *Alldeutsch* came into use, it denoted much more than this.

The *Alldeutsche Verband* (Pan-German Association) was founded in the nineties of the last century, and it is this which has made the term Pan-German current in its present acceptation. The man who took the leading part in founding the Association

* See Charles Andler, "Les Origines du Pangermanisme," 1915.

was the notorious Karl Peters, who was found guilty in Germany of brutality to the natives of German East Africa. By a kind of irony of fate, he found refuge in England. With such a founder the Association had something unsavoury about it from the beginning. Part, indeed, of the work which it set out to do was to champion the interests of German communities dispersed in other countries outside the German Empire—to maintain touch between them and the Fatherland, and keep them true to German traditions—but this was part only of its work. It also aimed at quickening the desire for power within the Empire, at impelling the Government into a hectoring policy with regard to other States, into an aggressive Imperialism and a continuous increase of armaments. It was this side of the activities of the Pan-German Association which has given "Pan-Germanism" the special meaning which it has to-day. The Association carried on an energetic propaganda throughout the Empire, and year by year its views spread farther among the people.

What did the Pan-Germans want? Monsieur Chéradame has set out to answer this question in his book "Le Plan Pangermaniste Démasqué."* His answer is based almost entirely upon two works —a pamphlet produced in 1895, "Gross-deutsch-

* Now translated into English under the title, "The Pan-German Plot Unmasked" (John Murray, 1917).

land und Mitteleuropa um das Jahr 1950," and a book by a certain Otto Tannenberg, "Grossdeutschland die Arbeit des 20ten Jahrhunderts," published in 1911. These two books are certainly symptomatic of the ideas passing through German brains in recent years, and we may be grateful to Monsieur Chéradame for calling the attention of the world to them. But it may be questioned whether he is right in supposing that the Pan-Germans as a whole were necessarily pledged to the views of these two writers, even if, as he says, the pamphlet of 1895 was published "under the ægis of the *Alldeutsche Verband*." Tannenberg's book is a particularly wild one. This is just a case where the foreigner may easily go wrong in placing documents whose genuineness is not disputed.

There was not, it would seem to me, so much a hard-and-fast "plan" as a body of ideas and sentiments which were held in different proportions and with a different degree of clearness by a multitude of persons. We may get light by thinking of our own Imperialist movement. The case, indeed, is somewhat modified by the fact that the British Empire was something which already existed, whereas the German imagination was at work upon an Empire which still largely belonged to the world of dream. Our Imperialists did not, as a rule, turn men's thoughts to the expansion of the Empire; they were mostly pretty well satisfied with the size

of the Empire as it was: their purpose was rather to arouse a sense of the worth of the Empire, of the greatness and splendour of Britain's task, and to hold up ideals of inner concentration and development. There were, however, in our case certain ideas implying an extension in this or that region of British authority beyond its present boundaries: we may take that of the Cape-to-Cairo Railway which became current towards the end of the last century. Such an idea seems to me much more like the constituents of German Imperialism than British Imperialism as a whole has been. And one remembers in the case of such an idea how it did not indicate a fixed programme so much as the floating image of something which it would be a fine thing to see realized some day, if the course of the world afforded an opportunity. To multitudes in Great Britain the idea embodied in the short phrase "Cape to Cairo" became familiar—excited, perhaps, a vague desire, was now more vivid to their minds and at another time faded, without ever becoming solidified in a definite purpose. If we could conceive such ideas as these greatly multiplied, a whole body of such ideas, more or less vague, more or less solid, we should probably have something very like the mental circumstances of Pan-German circles before the war.

We know that German desires for expansion went out in a great variety of directions—the

German colonies in Central and South Africa, regarded as the beginning of a German African Empire to extend from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean; the German colonies on the West Coast of Africa, rivals to the French African possessions, and, closely connected with the German interests in this region, the thought that Germany might some day replace France in Morocco; the German colonies in the South Seas; the footing in China with possibilities of the extension of German power in the Far East; the possibilities opened up for Germany in South America; the political and economic penetration of the Turkish Empire, to be connected with Central Europe by a predominance of German influence in the Balkans; the increase of German power at sea, implying ultimately, not only a new navy large enough to make it a risk for Great Britain to challenge it, but a firm hold on Antwerp or other ports on the North Sea.

That all these ambitions existed in Germany can be shown by documents; but it cannot be shown that where one or other of these prevailed all the others went with it. In certain Pan-German circles a programme may have been framed combining all of them. But one or more of these ideas may have affected different minds in different degrees and at different times, and meant rather an imaginative entertainment of possibilities than the clear view of some course of action.

Perhaps if we knew more of the activities of the German Government, we should find that in all these directions some practical steps had been taken. In two directions practical steps of a conspicuous kind had been taken—the Bagdad Railway and the increase of the German Navy. Here, over a course of years, a policy had been tenaciously followed which, if it reached its goal, would realize two of the Imperialist ambitions—would give Germany control over the Ottoman Empire and would make Germany at sea a formidable antagonist to England. This policy in 1914 could already show material results in the ships ready for war and in the long lines of steel laid down across Asia Minor.

But even if the supreme direction in Germany would seem to have been influenced by Pan-German ambitions, this does not mean that we need not ask, What of the more moderate opinion in the country? In the first place, it seems clear that the more moderate German opinion was represented, as well as the Pan-German, in high Government circles. The rumours current early in the war as to Germany's declaration of war having been preceded by a struggle within those circles between a chauvinist group and a moderate group connected with the Chancellor and the Foreign Secretary, Herr von Jagow, have been substantiated by later events. The continuance of such a cleavage is shown, for one thing, by the bitter attacks which have been made

persistently during the last two years upon the Chancellor from the Pan-German side, and the allegations of Junius Alter may be taken as evidence that such a division within the supreme Government existed on the eve of the war.

But the importance of moderate German opinion lies not only in the fact that it was represented in the Government. We must try to represent to ourselves how in all countries the better mind of the nation works. Where the supreme government of a country is directed by influences which do not represent the better mind of the nation, it may indeed impel the State into actions which are contrary to that better mind. The better mind is a body of public opinion which can often assert itself only slowly; it cannot keep pace with Government action. The existence of such opinion in a country is therefore a very imperfect guarantee against the State's embarking upon actions which are foolish or criminal. But where the State's action is disapproved by the better mind of the country, the Government finds a steady and persistent pressure exerted against it, a pressure of greater moral strength than its own, which usually grows gradually stronger and in the end probably becomes irresistible. Hence, though a Government may often embark upon a course of action which the conscience of a country disapproves, it can seldom persist in such action. In countries where Parliaments can

turn Governments out of office, an organ is provided by which public opinion may control the action of the State more directly than in Germany, and public opinion in many countries is shaped by a more independent press. But it is, I believe, a mistake to suppose for this reason that in Germany public opinion could not ultimately put a restraint upon the Government, if there were a public opinion resolved to do it. The Socialist leader, Wolfgang Heine, writing in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* last Christmas Eve, admitted that the political institutions of Germany gave some colour to the view prevalent abroad—the view that in Germany "a dominating class of aristocratic militarists rode rough-shod over a people condemned to impotence and incapable of asserting its will," and that "in important political questions the German people were powerless and were ruled by a brutal force which had as little regard for moral forces as for the rights of the people." But he added that this picture was a false one. One may believe that if the better mind of Germany, the circles who care most for righteousness, had condemned the action of the Government in going to war and were opposed to the prosecution of the war, the pressure of that opinion, even without the power of a Parliament, would sooner or later make it impossible for the Government to go on pouring out the blood and treasure of the people. If anybody thinks of the

German people as sheep driven to the slaughter against their will, we may agree with Heine that he is wrong.

Let us grant that before the war came the great bulk of Germans did not desire the war. Yet it is certain that as soon as war came, the great bulk of the Germans, including men of intellectual distinction and moral fervour, of high and humane character, endorsed the step taken by the Government, and have since then been solid for the energetic prosecution of the war. There are, indeed, pacifist circles in Germany—and the pacifist element seems to have been increasing during this past year in the working class, as is shown by the growing power of the Social Democrat "Minority"—but they are still probably only a small minority as compared with the people as a whole. The people as a whole, whatever differences there may be between good and bad men, between Pan-Germans and Moderates, is solid in the belief that the war ought to be carried on. In this sense, it is not true to say that we are fighting the German Government, but not the German people. The will of the Government and the will of the people are in this matter one.

This is why it is important to take account of the better German opinion. However large a part we may assign to Pan-German influences in the origination of the war, the strength of the Germans to

hold out up to the limit of their physical capacity is a moral strength, and it would fail, if the good men in Germany were not (with a few exceptions) solid for the carrying on of the war. We have admitted that, before the war came, the bulk of moderate Germany did not want the war. What did they want ?

From the evidence open to anyone on this side, who tries to read the documents with critical discrimination and an alert mind, I should say that we are here dealing with a case where it is impossible to draw precise outlines. Even in the case of the Pan-Germans there was not, as we have said, so much a hard-and-fast " plan " as a body of ideas and sentiments which were held in different proportions and with a different degree of clearness by a multitude of persons. And just because these ideas were floating and more or less vague, they could mingle variously with the thoughts of people outside distinctly Pan-German circles, so that no sharp line could be drawn between Pan-German circles and " Moderate " circles. The great majority of Germans, it may well be, had *something* of Pan-Germanism.

It is plain, I think, that the mind of the German people generally had got into a dangerous state in the years preceding the war. There was a widespread unrest.

" The Empire " (says a German writer) " had grown in riches and in the means of power, and was unwearied in increasing them. At the same time, it took as its unconditional guiding principle the policy of the Open Door, of peace under all conditions. Heads of some political training, especially abroad, discerned a dangerous and inexplicable tension between power, growing ever greater and greater, on the one hand and the (pacific) policy pursued on the other. We ourselves had come to feel a vague malaise (*ein dumpfes Misbehagen*)."*

One might find the causes of this malaise partly in the national temperament, partly in the prevalence of certain beliefs—not that one can establish an absolute separation between the two, since a particular temperament disposes to a certain kind of beliefs.

We may speak of a national temperament, even though we remember what was said at the outset of this discussion as to the danger of making sweeping statements about a multitude of different individuals. Whatever qualities we indicate as characteristic of a nation, there will always be a great number of individuals who do not correspond with the description, but it may still be true that in different nations particular qualities may be so commonly diffused that the general action of that people in the world will be largely determined by them. In this sense, it seems true to say that the

* Dr. E. Haendcke in the *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung*, August 7, 1916, p. 1054.

German has by temperament a more than ordinary readiness to suspect an evil will in those with whom he has to do, to think that somebody is wanting to get the better of him, to put a slight upon him. "The German," Baron von Hügel tells us, "is considerably more nervous, sensitive, offendible, vindictive, than the Englishman."* Jealousy is unhappily a quality by no means limited to any one people; in England much that might be achieved by self-forgetful co-operation is hindered by jealousy; but I am assured by a distinguished English man of science, who has had opportunities of becoming acquainted with the work of German scientific circles from within, that the personal jealousies rife among them go far beyond anything to be found in analogous quarters in England or France: they are taken more for granted, as a matter of course, and prominent scientists show a grudgingness in sharing their discoveries with each other which would be strange elsewhere.

Now, a nation which exhibits such characteristics in the relations between man and man at home is naturally disposed to regard other nations chiefly as potential enemies, to imagine that other nations are moved by a desire to circumvent it, to defraud it of its rights, to feel that any nation possessing any advantage which it does not possess itself owes it by that very fact compensation, as if for some

* "The German Soul and the Great War," p. 148.

injury. With such a temperament and such a belief as to the latent hostility of its neighbours, the German people found itself, moreover, in a position in which it lacked certain things possessed by some other nations. It had not a vast area of land, like Russia, which it might gradually populate; it had not oversea colonies, like Great Britain, where new German nations might grow up in union with the Fatherland; it did not even possess in tropical Africa territories as extensive as those of France, and the territories it did possess there were in regions separated far from each other. That Germany found itself in this position was due to a series of events in the past, to the actions of the German people throughout the preceding centuries.

"The most valuable colonial regions were already firmly held in other hands when we appeared upon the scene. Germany came too late to provide adequately for itself at the partitioning of the world. That was not our fault; it was our fate."*

Not, perhaps, the fault of the present generation of Germans, but certainly to some extent the fault of their ancestors.

It may be questioned whether the possession of territories overseas is essential to the well-being of such a State as Germany. Largely, I think, the Germans' feeling of being shut in was a case of self-

* Otto Hintze in "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg" (Teubner), second edition, p. 26.

suggestion, a sort of national claustrophobia. Anyway, they felt bitterly that history had been unkind to them. They felt also that geography was unkind to them—placed, as they were, with neighbours on both sides of them, who were, according to the German presupposition, rather potential enemies than neighbours. A permanent feeling of grievance came to weigh upon them: and it was a temptation, if history and geography had been unfair to them, to fly in the face of history and geography—to reverse accomplished facts by violence, and to defy their neighbours on all sides, indeed all the world, at once. The bulk of the German people, as we have admitted, shrank from the idea of war; but they felt the malaise; they could not acquiesce in the limits drawn by history and geography.

"The situation of Germany" (says Otto Hintze in the chapter quoted) "gives a peculiar character to our world-policy . . . something tentative, uncertain; it compels us to exercise great caution. It is a case of trying how far you can go, without actually provoking armed conflicts."

It is to be noted that in such bitter attacks upon England's policy as that of Erich Marcks in "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg"* the accusation brought is that England is trying to maintain the *status quo*, favourable to itself, against the "young new-grown power" (*jung emporgestiegene Kraft*) of

* P. 358 *f.*, second edition.

the German Empire. England, he says, wanted to keep open the sea-ways between the different countries of the Commonwealth, and laid a heavy hand upon any disturber (*Störer*). But all this is to admit that England was very well satisfied with the distribution of power upon the globe as it was, and that it was Germany whose interest it was to see it disturbed. An unrestful member Germany could hardly fail to be in the European family!

As a matter of fact, the Germans themselves do not, as far as I know, suggest that any of the other nations with oversea territories should have made over any part of these to Germany. In the case of England, against whom Germany's envy is chiefly directed, those oversea territories which were most valuable to the British State were the ones occupied by the new nations of English blood and speech growing up in association with the mother-country, and these could hardly be handed about as objects of exchange. As to England's greatest dependency of alien population, India, England had there incurred responsibilities to the people of the land from which it could not disengage itself at will, and I do not think that any section of Indians, even those most hostile to British rule, would have considered it a good action if England had offered to partition the country with Germany.

Even the Germans, as I say, do not suggest that England should have ceded to Germany territories

of which England already stood possessed when the movement for colonial expansion began in Germany in the eighties of the last century. And so far as tracts of the earth were left over to which Germany might hope to extend its authority, it is simply not true that England opposed a malevolent opposition to Germany's expansion. The story of recent years shows an alternation of moments when England seemed disposed to put some check upon Germany's plans, and moments when it was willing to fall in with Germany's desires. That England should not in all cases immediately give Germany a free hand for modifying the existing situation must appear only reasonable when one remembers that any modification of the existing situation involves a mass of consequences by which the interests of different Powers may be diversely affected, and no Power with the world-wide interests of England can afford to sanction any change of the situation without carefully assuring itself that its interests will not in some way be prejudiced by the change. It is not true that England was determined to perpetuate the *status quo* through thick and thin. It may be true that any alteration of the *status quo* was likely to cause some nervousness in England. But that can hardly be imputed to England as a crime. The security, for instance, of the British Empire would obviously be affected by any strong Power establishing itself upon the Persian Gulf. Even any-

one who holds that the claim of England to the exclusive control of the Gulf is unreasonable must allow that England would be bound to give solicitous scrutiny to any proposition of another Power to extend its arm to this region. But this is just what the Berlin-Bagdad Railway, as projected by Germany, did. England could not but insist that Germany should give certain guarantees before England agreed to the plan. But so far from England's opposing an uncompromising resistance to Germany's desires, it is well known and admitted in Germany that the two countries immediately before the war had reached an agreement extremely favourable to Germany—an agreement never, indeed, signed in consequence of the outbreak of war. German writers have to admit that both in this case and in that of the Portuguese colonies in Africa (which at one time it was thought that Portugal might be willing to sell) England showed itself far from unyielding. They have to admit that England even at certain moments sought Germany's friendship. They know of the utterances of prominent British statesmen, Lord Morley, the late Lord Percy, and others, earnestly insisting that Germany's legitimate desire for expansion ought to be treated by England with all sympathetic consideration.

In the presence of these facts German writers show that characteristic of the national tempera-

ment and that obstinate presupposition which we noted above. Behind every advance from the side of England there must necessarily have been a sinister purpose. In some way or other England was trying to get the better of Germany. In one of the most authoritative expositions of German policy, that by the late Chancellor, Prince Bülow, this is a salient characteristic. It is noted by Mr. J. W. Headlam in his Introduction to the English translation of "Deutsche Politik," published under the title "Imperial Germany" in 1916.

"Speaking of the prospects of an alliance with England, Prince Bülow explains that he was on his guard against being made a 'cat's-paw,' or, as the German has it, being used 'die Kastanien aus dem Feuer zu holen.' The assumption is that in any alliance which was made England would only be anxious to use her ally for her own purposes, and then cast her aside when the needs of the moment were over and her usefulness had been fulfilled. We are justified in assuming that this is the attitude which he himself also would have considered natural to take towards any ally of Germany, for men judge others by themselves."*

But this presupposition is not left in the condition of a mere instinctive prejudice or a belief with regard to a particular nation. By the constitution of the German mind it inevitably becomes embodied in a general theory consciously held and propounded. "This continuous need of theory, of system, is,

* Foreword, p. xxiv.

doubtless, one of the primary causes of all that the German effects and is of deep, abiding worth and fruitfulness, and, conversely, of all that the German effects and is of a shallow and arid, of a transitory, and even of a mischievous and destructive kind."*

The German theory of *Weltpolitik* is based upon the principle that antagonism is the normal relation of nations to each other. Nations are not different members of the human family whose normal relation is one of trust and concord, of co-operation in the great tasks set before man upon this planet, and whose mutual slaughter is a frightful and abnormal interruption of peaceful life. No, war is always going on, either latent, in so-called times of peace, or manifest, as now.

" Every State " (writes one German professor) " has its right to exist, acquired by history, and it follows the lines of evolution prescribed for it by nature and history. But the State-will, which has found a vehicle in a firmly compacted fabric, is above all else a *striving for power* (*Machtstreben*). Hence the nations are obliged to try issues with each other (*sich miteinander abzufinden*). Their co-existence is an eternal battle, in which only the efficient nation can stand upright, and the supreme interest of the State is to maintain itself."†

" It is only sober historical realism " (writes another) which sees things as they really are, and teaches us that

* Baron F. von Hügel, "The German Soul and the Great War," p. 128.

† Paul Herre, Professor of History at Leipzig, "Weltpolitik und Weltkatastrophe, 1890-1915," p. 12.

the battling and wrestling of States and nations with each other for precedence and power is a kind of law of nature. You can try, as the proverb puts it, to drive out this nature with a fork, but it always comes back again."*

A respected theologian and writer on the New Testament, Dr. Feine, says:

"The continuous interaction of nations (*der Prozess der Völker unter einander*) is War, and that will never be otherwise, as things are ordered in this world."†

Dr. Hintze admits that such a view may commend itself less to England and America. But that, he says, is only because their geographical position dispenses them from the necessity of watching their neighbours as narrowly as the Continental nations have to do. These Continental nations are as a regular thing "animated by a spirit of suspicion and emulation."‡

German arguments in defence of Germany's action often conclude in a *reductio ad absurdum;* any other course would have left Germany dependent upon the good-will of other Powers. This is the intolerable thought. "It is a question," said a former Chancellor, Prince Hohenlohe, in the Reichstag, "of safeguarding our existence as a trading

* Friedrich Meinecke, in Thimme and Legien's "Die Arbeiterschaft im Neuen Deutschland," p. 23.

† *Kreuz-Zeitung* for June 17, 1915.

‡ "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg," second edition, p. 4.

World-State. The German Empire must not be dependent upon the good-will of other stronger nations."* We can see that if one starts with the German presupposition noted above as to the purposes of other nations, the notion of being dependent upon them in any way must necessarily be dreadful. And one understands why any proposal implying a control of each particular State by the general body of civilized States—suggestions of subordination to some Central Court of Arbitration, of "Leagues to Enforce Peace," etc.—is regarded in Germany with abhorrence. A writer in *Das grössere Deutschland* had understood some remarks of Professor Delbrück's as admitting such a possibility, and hastens to protest.

"When he asks us to make some concession to American pacifism, meaning, presumably, that we should allow peace terms to be prescribed to us now by some World Areopagus, and in the future submit questions vital for us to an international Court of Arbitration (just as English statesmen, most recently Sir Edward Grey, have indicated), Delbrück proposes nothing more and nothing less than that our sacrifices in this war should have been made in vain. For what kind of a peace it would be, what kind of a position in the world Germany would have, if we had to depend on an international guarantee and the good pleasure of the World Powers, we can tell well enough after our experiences in

* Quoted in Reventlow, "Deutschlands auswärtige Politik," third edition, p. 160.

this war. If that was all we wanted to attain, it would have been better in the first instance to close with Sir Edward Grey's proposal of a conference."*

The periodical from which this last quotation comes is no doubt one of Pan-German complexion, but very much the same thing is said by one of the most sober German historians, Professor Meinecke:

"What would happen to us to-day, if we committed it to some Court of Arbitration to compose our strife, even though its members were supplied exclusively by neutral States? We have learnt enough of North American neutrality by this time to know that America would take good care to fleece us as well as Austria. Democratic control of treaties and agreements through representative assemblies are no guarantee of a pacific policy, when the inclination to an unpacific policy has penetrated through the mass of the people."†

Professor Paul Natorp, one of the principal writers on Philosophy in Germany, known especially to classical scholars as an authority on Plato, dealt with the subject of International Peace in a lecture he gave at Munich in September, 1915. He particularly repudiated the pacifist idea of avoiding all wars by means of an international Court of Arbitration, whose verdict might be enforced at need by an executive force drawn from all States in ratio

* Hermann Nieders in *Das grössere Deutschland* for October 7, 1916, p. 1309.

† F. Meinecke in Thimme and Legien's "Arbeiterschaft," pp. 23, 24.

to their population. This, in such a time as ours, would mean nothing else but a surrender to the united wills of the peoples possessed by a lust of conquest, nothing else but the acceptance of a condemnation to death under the fair forms of law.*

The conclusion is inevitable. Germany, in order to be safe, must be able to take on a coalition of all the other Powers.

"Germany is compelled by an absolute necessity of self-defence to make itself so strong in a military way that it can, if need be, hold its own against a whole world of enemies."†

That was the justification of a policy which has provoked practically all the rest of the world against Germany at the same time. And now that the struggle has come, the only successful issue for Germany will be one which leaves Central Europe so strong, relatively to all the other Powers of the world put together, as to be practically unassailable.

"In view of the ill-feeling against us" (says Prince Bülow), "which this war is bound to bring in its train, the mere restoration of the *status quo ante bellum* would mean for Germany, not gain, but loss. Only if our power, political, economic, and military, emerges from this war so strengthened that it considerably outweighs the feelings of enmity that have been aroused, shall we be able to assert with a clear conscience that our position in the world has been bettered by the war."‡

* *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, September 22, 1915.

† O. Hintze in "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg," second edition, p. 4.

‡ "Imperial Germany," p. 18.

Now, a position which left Germany so strong that it could securely risk the enmity of all the rest of the world put together would *ipso facto* leave the rest of the world at Germany's mercy. No single Power by itself could then resist Germany's dictation, and if it tried to shake off the overwhelming pressure by calling in the help of other Powers, that would be no good. The preponderance would still be on the side of Germany. Many worthy Germans are shocked when they hear that their enemies accuse Germany of aiming at world-dominion (*Weltherrschaft*). Nothing, they exclaim, was ever farther from their thoughts. All they want is to attain a position of security as one among the World Powers, not as the sole World Power. It is very common indeed in German writers nowadays to find them dwell upon the theme that the planet ought never to fall under the dominion of one Power, that variety is the law of the world, and that the existence of a plurality of Powers, each with its distinctive national traditions, is essential to the world's well-being. Sometimes one may find an English writer direct this argument against Germany, as if it were something which the Germans wanted to deny. But so far from wanting to deny it, German writers habitually insist upon it themselves with all possible unction.* There is, I think, no

* "There is something which helps small peoples to maintain themselves amongst greater ones, and that is the *spirit*. It is strange that more spirit should be active in the small ant and bee than in

reason to suppose that they are consciously insincere. When Germans whose name before the war was honoured tell us that all they are concerned about is that Germany should have a position of security amongst the World Powers, we may believe them. Only we may see how, starting from the presupposition we have indicated, they can regard as a secure position for Germany only such a position as would give Germany a virtual command of the earth. That at which Germany is aiming would be in effect a *Weltherrschaft*, whatever Germans may consciously intend.

It would not be safe to rule out the possibility that there was insincerity somewhere behind all this talk of what is necessary for Germany's security. The conscious designs in Pan-German circles seem

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the mighty whale, more in David than in Goliath, more in small States than in self-enclosed gigantic Empires. If civilization is to progress, the world must continue to exhibit a manifold of nations and States. It would, indeed, be possible for eternal peace to be established if there were one World-State of universal sovereignty. Then at last quiet would prevail, but it would be the quiet of the grave. . . .

"We must never be untrue to the vocation which our history has prescribed for us. We must never desire to rule the world, but can only aim at having equal rights with the rest, From the moment when we should cease to be the protectors of variety, the meaning of our history would be changed into self-contradiction and turn against us. . . . It would only make the world duller if Islam were not allowed to make its contribution, but it would be decidedly richer if India and Egypt, Finland and the Ukraine, could become independent. A free Poland, in my belief, would be as little a misfortune for civilization as a free Ireland" (George Ruseler in *Die Hilfe*, February 24, 1916).

to have been, as was said above, something much more magnificent, and it may long be a question to what extent the State action of Germany was directed by Pan-German ambitions. It is also possible that when once the Government had embarked upon war, official inspiration may have caused a presentment of Germany's case to be circulated which was known in the higher circles to be untrue. It was necessary to rally all the more moderate elements in the country to the support of the war, and advisable also to conciliate the opinion of neutral countries. But whatever insincerity there may or may not have been in the official propagation of the view we have described, it is unquestionable, I think, that it is sincerely held by large numbers of good Germans. And we have seen that it hangs together logically with that belief, as to the facts of the world, with which Germans set out.

If we realize this, we can perhaps understand how there may be in Germany many good men—men who recognize the same fundamental moral principles as we do, whose religion really is Christian, and not a strange amalgam of the ancient Teutonic paganism and the Old Testament and Luther, and who yet have persistently supported a war which seems to us so criminal. Such men would naturally never have entertained the idea of their country's plunging the world into the horrors of war for the sake of "triumph, that insulting vanity." But we

can imagine them supporting a war which, as they saw it, was necessary to their country's safety. And with their presupposition as to the abiding purpose of all other nations, they were logically bound to infer that their country could never be safe till it had demonstrated its strength to stand up to the whole world. They may never have considered what power for offence this implied. They may honestly have thought of the war all through as defensive. In the early days of the war, perhaps they talked of Germany's power to defy a world full of devils with more big-chested, loud-voiced assurance, and later on talked rather with grieved pathos of the contrast between Germany's harmless simplicity and the wicked will of the rest of the world to destroy her; but even if the tone changed, the war was always a defensive one for them.

We, however, are bound to consider what the position which they desire for Germany would imply for us and for the world. And looking at the matter from that angle, we cannot but see that the attempt of any Power, in the world as it is to-day, to make itself able to defy all the others, is an attempt which the others must resist with all their force or lose their freedom. Germany says it is an intolerable idea that it should be dependent upon the good-will of other Powers. That is exactly what we are determined that Germany shall be. No other nation makes a claim to such independence. Great

Britain certainly, with all the delicate web of over-sea connections upon which its life depends,* could never stand against a combination of the rest of Europe. It is well that this mutual interdependence of the nations of the world should continue, whether it ever prove practicable to organize their relations in such a way that the verdict of some central court is enforced upon any refractory Power by all the rest, or whether the present state of things goes on, in which it is left to the free discretion of the several nations to form alliances against any Power which shows itself a common danger. So long as this mutual interdependence continues, it will never be safe for any Great Power to outrage or bully any of the weaker nations, because such action will set the public opinion of the civilized world against it. No doubt the check is an imperfect one, because the civilized nations may often strongly disapprove of an act of aggression without going to war with the aggressor. But the disapproval of Europe is always a danger to an aggressive Power—is a weight in the scale which may turn the balance for war, if other weights are added.† Because it is such, no

* "Die Seeherrschaft die leichter verwundbar ist als jede andere" —Sea-dominion, which is more vulnerable than any other (Troeltsch in *Die Neue Rundschau* for February, 1917, p. 236).

† One may instance the case of Turkey and its treatment of the Armenians. Unquestionably the Turkish massacres of the Armenians in the nineties of the last century finally turned the old friendship of England into abhorrence. England did not go to war with Turkey, but by the withdrawal of England's good-will Turkey had

Power willingly incurs the disapproval of the civilized world; that disapproval is always to some extent a deterrent. But if there were any Power in a position to disregard the good-will of all the rest with impunity, there would be no check of this kind upon its actions. It could become the tyrant of the world.

The matter can hardly be better put than Mr. J. W. Headlam has put it in an eloquent paragraph:

"Germany asks for security: she shall have it—precisely the same security that France and Russia and Italy and Holland enjoy; a security based partly on her own strength, but even more on the recognition of the laws and principles of Europe. Germany asks for guarantees: she shall have them—precisely the same guarantees with which every other State has to be content; the guarantee that the tyrannical overgrowth of any one State or confederation of States will inevitably arouse in the rest of Europe a coalition before which every nation, even the strongest, must bow. These laws of European life have been learnt in the course of centuries by all nations and accepted, and they have always been learnt in the same way—in the bitter school of experience and war. Germany is now learning the lesson, and the war will continue till the lesson has been completed; then it will stop. It will stop when it has been burnt into the heart of the whole nation so that it will never be forgotten. Men talk of the terms of peace. They matter little. With a Germany victorious, no

forfeited its best defence, and it is actually a consequence of its treatment of the Armenians twenty years ago that Turkey is now involved in Germany's fate.

terms could secure the future of Europe; with a Germany defeated, no artificial securities will be wanted, for there will be a stronger security in the consciousness of defeat."*

The terms most common in German writers to explain what Germany is fighting for are *Weltmacht* (world-power) or *Weltgeltung* (counting for something in the world). It is quite a misrepresentation, they say, when their enemies identify *Weltmacht* with *Weltherrschaft* (dominion over the world). One may see the working of the German mind in their subsuming their aims under a term of wide generality, the particulars under a great principle. It is not this or that piece of territory, not this or that concrete concession, that the Germans are mainly out to gain, but power in the abstract. Probably no nation before ever set out to construct a world-empire *de toutes pièces*, on a general principle, because it wanted empiry. This is characteristically German. It may well be, as we have said, that the directing circles have been working on a concrete and clearly-defined plan, but to get the support of the people they held up the hazy ideal of *Macht*. This is what has been drawing the popular heart. To it corresponded that vague malaise of which we have spoken—the feeling that somehow Germany was being defrauded of its rights, the obsession by metaphors which suggested

* "The Issue," by J. W. Headlam, pp. 38, 39.

something vast and splendid and undefined, such as "Germany's place in the sun." Indeed, the very indeterminateness of these desires were what made them especially dangerous. For power, as such, is something that has no limits. The old philosophers were fond of pointing out, in the case of riches, that the acquisition of them could never satisfy because you never reached a limit beyond which you could desire no more. So a nation which, by its own confession, is out for these indeterminate things, *Macht*, *Geltung*, cannot but be alarming to its neighbours.*

It is impossible to get any clear view of what the Germans mean when they complain that they have not "a position of equal rights alongside of England" (*eine gleichberechtigte Stellung neben England*).†

* I am glad to find that my view is the one expressed by Mr. L. B. Namier in his striking little book "Germany and Eastern Europe" (p. 58):

"It is easier to analyze the spirit of German Imperialism than its scheme, for it has no scheme in the proper sense of the term. It can be said to tend in certain directions rather than to pursue definite ends. Its fundamental principles being expansion and dominion, the very vagueness of its aims renders it the more universally dangerous; no compromise or understanding is possible with a nation or Government which proclaims a programme of world-policy and world-power, and yet fails to limit its views to certain definite objects. No clear statement, either official or semi-official, of the aims of German Imperialism has ever been put forward; the material meaning of the phrase about 'the place in the sun' has never been explained to us. Like a jack-in-the-box, the spectre of German Imperialism appeared wherever anything was happening, whether in China or in Morocco, in South Africa or in the distant islands of the Pacific, in Asia Minor or in the South American Republics."

† O. Hintze, "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg," second edition, vol. i., p. 52.

Differences of power between States one understands: it is plain that the State strongest at sea can do things which other States cannot, and each of the Great Continental Powers, in virtue of its military forces and its geographical position, can do some things which the others cannot. But the term *Geltung*, the phrase about "equal *rights*," introduces an idea with another nuance. It has regard presumably to the mental attitude of others, their readiness to take the wishes of the German people into account. This kind of abiding suspicion that other people are not thinking of them as highly as they ought to think is as difficult to meet and dispel in the case of a nation as in the case of individuals who are abnormally "sensitive, offendible, vindictive."

That Germany could not carry through all its desires in the world without modification, that it had to compromise or withdraw here and there in view of the opposition of other States, is true enough. This is true of all States where they are not in a position of sovereign dominance. It could only constitute a legitimate grievance if, when the Germans say "equal rights," dominance is what they really have in mind. One is reminded of what someone has said about the Mediæval Church, that "whenever it was prevented from persecuting it thought itself persecuted." As a matter of fact, when Germans forget for a moment their rôle

as an ill-treated nation, they admit that the case was quite the other way.

"The military achievements" (writes Prince Bülow) "which had enabled us to regain our position as a Great Power in Europe also assured that position. They long discouraged any attempt of the Great Powers to deprive us of our right to a voice in the counsels of Europe—a right which we had won in three victorious campaigns, and which has since then, for nearly half a century, *never been seriously disputed, although it was unwillingly granted.*"*

Here the writer wanted at the moment to exhibit the strength of the German position, and so now we are told that Germany *had* equality of rights, and the resentment only comes out in the complaint that the hidden feelings of the other Powers were unfriendly. But when a Power which has the position which Prince von Bülow here describes, keeps on declaring to the world that it has not yet enough of this impalpable *Geltung*, it is not surprising that the world should become nervous.†

Perhaps it is fortunate for the world that this

* "Imperial Germany," p. 8.

† "When a nation is so uncertain as to what it ought to want, and still more as to what it ought *not* to want—never in any circumstances to want, great as the temptations of the moment may be—the fatal consequence is to be seen, not only in the disquiet which comes to characterize its own actions, but no less in the disquiet which it provokes amongst its neighbours, who, in presence of the unknown, think it necessary to be prepared for the most unlikely." (A writer, signing himself A. J. [Alfred Jaffe ?], in the *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung* for January 28, 1917, p. 97.)

German mode of procedure *did* create alarm at the outset. For if Germany had acted in another way, if it had let no more be known than that the German Empire was bent on obtaining, let us say, the economic and political control of Asia Minor, and had said nothing of any other ambitions reaching out into immensity—Germany would most probably, we can see now, have secured the particular object. And from that it might have gone on to mark out another limited aim for itself and secured that. And in that way it might have crept into the position which gave it command of the earth without at any stage provoking such a coalition of Powers against it as it has done now. Because Germany proclaimed that it was out for power as such, for power in whatever quarter of the globe some increment of it could be laid of, the whole world was made uneasy at once; and all the other Great Powers of the world have united to arrest Germany while there is still time.

In a recent number of his *Preussische Jahrbücher* (March, 1917, pp. 350-370) Professor Hans Delbrück tries to refute the accusation that Germany had been aiming at a *Weltherrschaft* by arguing that the resources of the nations allied against Germany are so vastly greater than the resources of Germany that any desire on Germany's part to impose its predominance upon them would be too obviously absurd for the accusation to have any plausibility.

The fallacy of Delbrück's argument is transparent. It presupposes that the existing aggregation of power against Germany is something permanent, something the Germans must have taken for granted in laying their plans. His argument does indeed go to show that *in this war* Germany has no chance of victory, but it does not show that Germany might not by a cleverer policy have broken the power of Russia and France before it alarmed England, and then, bit by bit, have won a position which enabled it to dictate to the world. It is true that such a position of Germany would sooner or later have united against it a volume of power which would free the world from its yoke. But that is no reason why we should watch it establish its dominion with complacent acquiescence. It was true, even in the case of Napoleon, that his European Empire was certain to be broken up, sooner or later, by national struggles for independence, but that was no reason why our fathers should not resist it from its inception. Professor Delbrück has to admit that the accusers of Germany can find utterances of Pan-Germans to support their charge, but he would have us treat such utterances as too wild to be taken account of. Wild indeed they were, but they did not perhaps conflict so obviously with physical possibilities as Professor Delbrück would make out.

Curiously enough, in the same number of the *Preussische Jahrbücher* (p. 505) is a review by Delbrück of a book by Professor Johannes Haller, of Tübingen, on Prince Bülow's policy. Professor Haller's criticism of that policy seems to be in substantial agreement with what has just been urged here. Professor Haller, indeed, comes in at this point as the *enfant terrible*. The right course, he says, would have been for Germany to deal with Russia, France, and England, one after the other. It ought to have accepted Chamberlain's friendly hand at the beginning of the twentieth century and postponed the building of its navy till Russia and France had been prostrated (*niedergeschlagen*), and then have built its navy and settled accounts with England (*auch mit England abrechnen*). Professor Delbrück's defence of Bülow takes the line of arguing that every alternative policy which Haller can suggest would have had still greater disadvantages. But our point here is not to prove that the plan of Germany's crushing the other three Great Powers, one by one, instead of having to meet them all together, was a feasible one. Our point is to show that such an idea can be entertained by a man like Professor Haller of Tübingen; and when Delbrück in his article tries to make out that the idea of Germany's compelling the other Great Powers of the world to yield to its will would be stark madness,

Professor Haller is a proof to the contrary. In fact, the existence of Professor Haller's book completely knocks the bottom out of the whole argument of Professor Delbrück's article. There was no such physical impossibility in Germany's gaining a (temporary) world-hegemony, if Germany had gone another way about it, as to make it a ridiculous thing for Englishmen to see embodied in the rulers of the German State such an ambition as their fathers had had to combat in Napoleon.

It would be interesting to know for how much a characteristic of the German mind, which might seem to have only linguistic significance, has counted as a cause of war. I think I have heard or seen the suggestion somewhere that the German literary style is responsible for a great deal. Neither in the Latin languages nor in English do writers ordinarily build up their sentences with abstract substantives and phrases of a vague quasi-philosophical sound to the extent common in German. It seems plain that the power of such phrases to dominate the mind of men, to inflame them for action, is greater in Germany than anywhere else. One may willingly recognize that this liability of the German mind to be swayed by abstract terms and phrases is the defect of qualities which, as Baron von Hügel has shown in his book quoted above, have noble manifestations in what the Germans have achieved in

systematic thought and in philosophy. But one certainly seems to see the evils of the defect in the present conflict. The power of abstract terms and phrases contributed to work up that dissatisfaction, that craving for something, they knew not precisely what, which enabled the rulers of Germany to draw the whole people after them into the war. It is the power of abstract terms and phrases which hinders to-day just self-criticism in the German people, because they can escape from the stings of conscience after any action, however wicked, by obscuring the facts in a cloud of pseudo-philosophical verbiage. German war literature has produced veritable portents in this line, and one finds similar language current, more or less, even among those who represent the better mind of Germany. If the German people had been able to see the facts of the world as they were in their plain reality, the war might never have come, and that they failed to see them as they were was probably in part due to their precipitancy in reading facts through the medium of pretentious theories, their readiness to take phrases for realities.

The deduction that Germany could never be safe till it was powerful enough to stand against all the world was reinforced by the philosophic theory which made the acquisition of power—of power and still more power—the very thing that the State was

there for. And this theory, as we have said, was not confined to Pan-German circles, but was the doctrine instilled into the people generally by its teachers—the Universities, the writers, the press. No judgment on the existing situation, on the problem of the settlement after the war, can be sound which does not take account of the peculiar perversion which the German mind has undergone.

To form schemes for a League of Nations on the hypothesis that Germany, with its present cast of mind, could be included in such a League as a Power of the same kind as the others, is to simplify a problem by shutting the eyes to one of its essential elements. The present catastrophe has not come about through the general failings of humanity everywhere, but through a special perversion of mind in one member of the family of States, which could not but bring about a violent disturbance. If you see a group in the street engaged in a scuffle, it is a cheap way of exhibiting your lofty superiority to pass it by on the assumption that all who engage in a street brawl are equally to blame and that all struggles imply a deficient sense of dignity. It may be that on closer inquiry you will find that the group consists of a number of people trying to get a powerful maniac under control. One man disposed to be violent makes a whole number of peaceable people act violently. The question is not, Who is involved in the undignified struggle ? but,

What is the origin of the trouble? The origin of the present catastrophe is the temper of the German people in A.D. 1914—the craving for vague splendid things, the unquestioning credulity with which they were ready to follow their rulers into a prodigious adventure.

CHAPTER II

THE CLASH WITH ENGLAND

It was Germany's striving for power, and no commercial jealousy on England's part, which brought Germany into collision with the British Empire—the State which is at one and the same time old England and a young world-wide Commonwealth of Nations. Nothing is more commonly asserted on the German side than that England entered the war from motives of commercial jealousy, because Germany's industry and trade had developed so mightily in recent years that England, too slack to compete by honest work, wanted to crush a rival by engineering a great coalition against him. That has long become in Germany a journalistic commonplace. Apparently by large numbers of Germans it is taken to be a proposition as unquestionable as that the sun rose this morning. It is a main source of the hatred which makes Germans blind. Christian preachers are stimulated by it to ravings which seem to them compatible with the religion they profess because they feel themselves like Habakkuk or Ezekiel denouncing Babylon

or Tyre. Professors, who, from their occupation, might have been expected to be somewhat slow to believe without proof, accept the statement with as little examination and thought as the multitude.* It is strange that no cool hour ever comes to them when they sit down and think quietly what the statement means and what kind of evidence there is for it. Motives and intentions exist only in the minds of individuals. Have any of those who in Germany repeat this assertion, ever tried to make clear to themselves what individuals out of the forty millions of the United Kingdom they mean to accuse of wanting to crush Germany from commercial jealousy ? Of the members of the Cabinet, for instance, who took the final decision for war on August 4, 1914, were any of them—Mr. Asquith, or Viscount Grey, or Mr. Lloyd George—seething with envy because Germany was selling a larger number of machines or toys or glass lenses, or whatever it might be, in the markets of the world ? Were any of them influenced by the desire to please some friend or supporter who was interested in the sale of machines or toys or glass lenses ? The resolve

* It may often occur to people that it is difficult to reconcile the crude views as to the recent history of the world put forward or believed by apparently erudite Germans, with the reputation of the Germans for systematic learning. Some light may be thrown upon the phenomenon by the complaint of the *Kreuz-Zeitung* that the study of *contemporary* history is largely neglected in Germany in comparison with the time and pains spent upon the study of earlier periods (*Kreuz-Zeitung*, January 4, 1916, morning).

of the Cabinet to send an ultimatum could not have been effectual if it had not had the support of the country. This kingdom could not have carried on the war if the bulk of the people had not considered it necessary to fight. More than a million of the younger men offered themselves voluntarily for military service in the earlier part of the war: they came from every sort of stratum and circle of society, and represented their several shades of opinion and feeling—Oxford and Cambridge, the professions, commercial circles, labour; any mode of feeling general in any class would have been represented amongst them. Well, how many among that million of young men do the Germans suppose faced the rigours of war because they were tormented by the thought of there being so many German machines or German toys or German lenses in the market? Amongst the millions of Great Britain there were no doubt a certain number of manufacturers and merchants whose profits were adversely affected by German competition. It would be impossible to prove that the thought never passed through the minds of any one of them: "If only these confounded Germans were not in the way!" But I have never heard of any who dared to propose that England should go to war with Germany for such a reason. We must all remember having seen complaints fairly commonly at one time in the papers that the English trader in foreign countries

was being supplanted by the German, but the moral drawn was invariably that English business men must study the foreign market more carefully, that their agents must be better trained and learn foreign languages more—in fact, beat the Germans by intelligence and hard work, just on the lines the Germans say would be the legitimate ones. The British business man was habitually girded at for his slowness, his rigidity, whether justly or not, in the English press, but it was never suggested that the British should attempt to get rid of the German competition by violence. Even supposing the Germans could see into the breasts of British manufacturers before the war and discover in them the thought that a war with Germany would be profitable for their business, they would not establish the assertion that the British people went to war for such reasons, unless they could show that the few individuals in question had such influence in the country that they could make their particular thoughts generally prevalent, that they could dominate the mind of the people and of the Government—a mind which after all is largely fashioned, both in the press and in Government offices, by men whose antecedents are not commercial but academic. As a matter of fact, all reasonable people in England recognized that although this or that individual might gain temporarily by the elimination of German industry and trade, the great bulk of

consumers in England would suffer by a state of things which evacuated the market of German goods and allowed British manufacturers to grow more careless about the quality of the goods they supplied. Even if the Germans suppose that the English generally were wicked enough to go to war in order to suppress German industry and trade, they might ask themselves whether it is credible that a "nation of shopkeepers" could be such fools. Besides this, had the British people wanted to eliminate German competition from the home market and from the Crown Colonies, they had a much easier way of doing it than war. They had only to put on protective tariffs. They did not do so. When Mr. Joseph Chamberlain initiated the Tariff Reform campaign—not, of course, for commercial reasons, but because his imagination was fired by the idea of Imperial Unity and he regarded a preferential tariff as helping in that direction—the nation deliberately rejected the proposal. The cause of Tariff Reform had not grown stronger, but had largely faded into the background before the war.

Occasionally one finds a German, accustomed to deal scientifically with facts, whose objectivity of vision has not been quite destroyed by mass-suggestion. Dr. Alfred Hettner, for instance, Professor of Geography in Heidelberg, has written during the war a book entitled "Englands Weltherrschaft und

der Krieg" ("England's World-Dominion and the War"), which one could not certainly describe as untroubled by the popular passion, but which seems to show a desire to see things straight still pathetically struggling with that passion in the writer's mind. "It is hardly correct," he declares in one place (p. 220), "though this is a common German view, to regard commercial jealousy as the predominant motive in England's hostile policy and as having determined its final resolution to take part in the war." Dr. Hettner sees how strange a fact it would be, on the German hypothesis, that England took with such placidity the growth of American competition. The fact, indeed, that the industry and commerce of another nation was growing, simultaneously with the German, alongside of the British, without exciting British hostility, definitely brings the German theory of England's commercial jealousy to the test of practical experiment and disproves it by the logical method of differences. This has been pointed out by Mr. Bertrand Russell, who, because he has opposed the country's participation in the war and has had restraints put upon him by the Government, the Germans often refer to as one of England's few wise and honest men.

"It is said on the Continent—not only by Germans—that jealousy of Germany's economic development was an equal cause of hostility; but I believe this to be an

entire mistake. America's economic development has been quite as remarkable as that of Germany, but it has not produced the slightest ripple of political hostility."*

Again, Dr. E. Haendcke writes:

"The ruthless economic war against Germany, carried on especially by England, has given rise to a view which is both dangerous and also characteristic of the political thinking of wide circles of our people—the view that England's object is to overthrow its most dangerous rival in the markets of the world. Such an opinion entirely overlooks England's striving for Power. England carries the fight into the economic field, because it knows that a decisive defeat inflicted upon Germany would almost cripple our military strength. But it is far from creditable to us, when we rate our opponents so low as to conceive of this war, dire episode as it is in world-history, as a commercial war. For England, as for us, it is a war for Power, even if on the one side it is for the gaining of Power, and on the other for the securing of Power already gained."†

It might, we have said, have made the Germans less confident in their repetition of this statement as to England's motive had they reflected that they were applying to the nation as a whole a statement which, if true at all, could be true only of individual persons, and asked themselves, further, what particular persons they meant to indicate. It might

* "Justice in War-Time," p. 71.

† *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung*, August 7, 1916, p. 1053.

also have made them pause, had they reflected that assertions as to motives and intentions refer to things not accessible to direct observation, unless we have some occult power of clairvoyance. That England went to war in August, 1914, is a fact patent to the senses: the motives which prompted the British Government to declare war and the mass of individuals constituting the British nation to endorse the action of the Government, can only be ndirectly inferred. One usual way in which we argue a person's motives is by his words, what he himself tells us that his motives are. The public utterances of Englishmen, in the press, in Parliament, on platforms, before and during the war, form a considerable body of statements as to their views and intentions. Of course, where a man alleges his motives to be high ones, we cannot always trust his word, and the Germans may summarily wave aside every British statement incompatible with their theory that the motive of British action was commercial jealousy, by saying that it is not honest. When, on the other hand, a man admits that his motives are low, in most cases his words are taken as a sure disclosure of what his motives really are, and this body of British statements has been searched by the Germans with all their strenuous industry, in order to see whether they cannot get some authoritative admissions that British motives were what they allege them to be. And nothing, I

think, can be a more signal exhibition of the emptiness of the German contention than the result of this search.

They have found an admission. It says exactly what they wanted it to say. It calls for a war on Germany as England's commercial rival, it appeals to England's "long history of successful aggression"; it says:

> "If Germany were extinguished to-morrow, the day after to-morrow there is not an Englishman in the world who would not be the richer. Nations have fought for years over a city or a right of succession; must they not fight for two hundred and fifty million pounds of yearly commerce?" And it concludes: "*Germaniam esse delendam.*"

The document which has served the Germans' turn so well is an article which appeared nearly twenty years ago in the *Saturday Review* (September 11, 1897). Englishmen generally know nothing about it. If men, now middle-aged or elderly, read it twenty years ago on some summer holiday in a country house or among the Scotch moors, or in the reading-room of some foreign hotel (only few of the readers of the *Saturday Review* would be frequenting their London club in September), they have most of them, no doubt, forgotten all about it. But one may still read the article in one of the bound-up volumes of the *Saturday Review* in the British Museum, the edges of the paper already beginning

to yellow with age. The article has been a perfect godsend to the Germans. In Germany it has not been forgotten. I suppose, from the day of its discovery, it must have been quoted many thousand times in Germany; since the beginning of the war one might guess that it had been quoted on the average two or three times a day in various papers and war-books.

The full comedy of this cannot, of course, be appreciated by the Germans, since they naturally do not know, as an Englishman can, what the *Saturday Review* stood for—they cannot "place" its utterances, as we say. They might, indeed, have considered that in any case an article twenty years old was rather a shaky basis for a theory as to the policy of a whole nation over a period of some thirty years. But, as it happens, in this case, there are other circumstances which heighten the absurdity. The *Saturday Review* in the last century was a paper which aimed at stimulating the jaded appetite of club-men by vigorous vituperation of something or somebody. The reviewer of a book would sometimes, to my knowledge, have his manuscript sent back to him to have more pepper added. People liked the paper for the same reason that they liked hot curry. It did not much matter what the *Saturday* attacked: it was likely to be clever and amusing, with a spice of ὕβρις. But this is not all. In 1897 the editor of the *Saturday Review* was Frank

Harris. Whether he actually wrote the article in question I do not know; but since it is the first article in that number, it seems probable that he did; in any case, it is an editorial article, for the sentiments of which the editor must be held responsible.* Harris was even then a man of peculiar reputation. His line was to display a contempt for the established moral standards, to proclaim his contempt for Christianity, *épater le bourgeois*. The brutality and egoism which characterize the article were characteristic of the attitude affected generally by the man. It is in recent memory how the *Spectator* denounced the *English Review* because the latter published an article by Harris (who had then ceased to edit the *Saturday*) defending unchastity. Such is the voice whose utterances the Germans, for their purposes, reproduce contin-

* Mr. P. Chalmers Mitchell, F.R.S., in the introduction to a book he published early in 1915, "Evolution and the War" (John Murray), claims to have been the author of the article quoted by Prince von Bülow as "that famous article published in the *Saturday Review* in the autumn of 1897." Mr. Mitchell says that Prince von Bülow has got the date wrong, because his article was actually published on February 1, 1896. But it is Mr. Mitchell who is mistaken. The article quoted so much in Germany is not his article of February 1, 1896, signed "By a Biologist," but the article (unsigned) of September 11, 1897. Both Mr. Mitchell's article and the 1897 article use the Latin phrase "*Germania est delenda*." The German references to the 1897 article continually single out this phrase. Hence, no doubt, Mr. Mitchell supposed erroneously that his article of 1896 was the one referred to. Professor Oncken in "Deutschland und der Weltkrieg," second edition, p. 539, refers to Mr. Mitchell's article as well as to the one of September, 1897, but the latter is *the* article of which so much is made in Germany.

ually as the voice of England. But even this is not all. Since the beginning of the war Harris has been active in America, participating in an *anti-British* campaign. One may therefore, from time to time, come across references to him in a German paper as another of the few wise and upright spirits who form rare exceptions to the general darkness and turpitude of England; he is among the white ravens of the *Continental Times*, the anti-British paper published in English in Germany—the very same man whose utterances in 1897 the German papers continually refer to as the authentic expression of England's evil will! This is the climax of the comedy.

Mr. Robertson suggests in his book "The Germans" (p. 248) that the article of 1897 was actually inspired from Germany. The ground on which apparently he bases the suggestion is that, on the one hand, the article said exactly what the Jingoes in Germany wanted said in England at that moment in order to give impetus to their campaign for a big navy, and, on the other hand, the fact that Harris, who was responsible for the article, has now come out openly on the anti-British, and therefore pro-German, side. It must be allowed that the suggestion, if these two facts are put together, "lies near," to translate a useful German idiom. And yet I do not believe it to be true. The line taken by Harris in 1897 against Germany is sufficiently

accounted for by his general desire to take a violent line against something, and the fact that he has now gone into the camp of his country's enemies seems more likely, in the case of such a man, to be evidence of moral levity than of some deep continuity of purpose.

One thing which this whole story of the *Saturday Review* article in Germany leaves a matter of astonishment is the degree to which trained German historians throw the rules of their science to the winds when their national prejudice comes into play. It is one of the most elementary rules of historical science that before a document is used as evidence an attempt should be made to ascertain the quarter from which it proceeds, the particular bias which has to be allowed for in estimating its statements, the group whose tendency it may aim at furthering. The Germans take credit to themselves because in exercising their "Higher Criticism" they have methodically applied such rules as this to the documents of two thousand years ago. But when it comes to modern documents, you see a man like Professor Hermann Oncken, who is supposed to know something about his business, grossly clutch out of the mass of British political literature a document like this old article, and plank it down, as if anything that came to hand from England could be taken indiscriminately as an index of British policy, without ever a thought of inquiring

what personality or what interest it may stand for. Nay, without even exercising upon it that internal criticism of which we hear so much when a German professor gets to work upon writings attributed to Xenophon or St. Luke. For the document itself states plainly that the *Saturday Review* began its campaign against Germany in *opposition* to the otherwise universal sentiments of the British people:

"Three years ago, when the *Saturday Review* began to write against the traditional pro-German policy of England, its point of view made it isolated among leading organs of opinion. When, in February, 1896, one of our writers, discussing the European situation,* declared Germany the first and immediate enemy of England, the opinion passed as an individual eccentricity."

It is true that the article goes on to declare with satisfaction that British opinion has now veered against Germany,† but the sentence we have quoted would have been enough to warn any careful critic not to accept the utterances of the *Saturday Review* as representative of English opinion.

Here, then, is the result of the Germans' furious search through English political literature for admissions to confirm their theory that England

* This is Mr. Chalmers Mitchell's article.

† That British feeling with regard to Germany had undergone a change between the date of the two articles cannot be regarded as due to the efforts of the *Saturday Review*. The Kaiser's telegram to President Krüger had come in the interval.

attacked Germany from commercial envy—an article produced twenty years ago by, or under, Frank Harris. We may be sure that if better material were discoverable, they would have displayed it to the world. That they always go on throwing forward this one freakish article is proof that better material was not discoverable. We seem, therefore, justified in saying that nothing can be a more signal exhibition of the emptiness of the German contention than the result of their search.

A further consideration: If England had entered upon the war from commercial motives, she must have seen long ago that it was a bad business. "Ah yes," the Germans sometimes say, "England entered upon the war from a miscalculation; she thought the great coalition would win a cheap and rapid victory, and then found herself let in for this huge expenditure she never expected." But if at any moment England had wished to retire from the fight—if she had been moved by financial considerations only and not by considerations of honour—she could have done so. It is quite certain that at any moment Germany, to detach England from the ring of her enemies, would have been willing to offer most profitable terms. England has known from the beginning of the war that she was bound to spend upon the war incomparably more than she could regain by the most complete victory. Even if England takes from Germany, by way of an in-

demnity, the whole of Germany's former colonial dominions—with the exception of those territories which pass to France—no one could reasonably say that England went to war for gain. The value of the German colonies was estimated by Sir Harry Johnston as £100,000,000.* I do not know exactly on what principle such estimates are made or how far they are accurate; but in any case, the value of the German colonies is immensely below England's war expenditure—an expenditure which, it is now evident, will be well over £4,000,000,000. It is hardly a colourable accusation to bring against a "nation of shopkeepers" that they deliberately spend some £4,000,000,000 in order to procure something worth £100,000,000. If England, clearly realizing that her continuance in the war will make her poorer for the rest of the lifetime of all Englishmen now alive, and that at any moment the enemy would give her excellent terms, to make a separate peace, has nevertheless deliberately chosen to go on with the war, this proves that the motives of England are at any rate not predominantly commercial.

It is in truth, as Germans sometimes put it in a concise term, a *Machtfrage*, a question of power, which lies behind the war, and it is also true (as Dr. Haendcke implicitly admitted) that it was Germany who wished to gain, and England who wished to secure—that it was Germany who wished

* *Nineteenth Century and After* for April, 1915, p. 764.

to disturb the *status quo*, and England who was satisfied. But this difference is just the crucial one. Because Germany was out to gain a power which belonged still to the world of imagination and desire, it was, as we have seen, out for something essentially unlimited; because England wished to preserve a power already there in the world of fact—to preserve, not to increase it—it was concerned for something whose limits anybody could see by looking at them. Now, quite apart from the question whether England had more power than its due share, the fact that on the one side the object fought for is unlimited and on the other side definite, gives the *Machtfrage* quite a different character in the two cases.

But is England claiming something preposterous in wishing to preserve its relative power at sea? The Germans retort to the charge that they are aiming at a *Weltherrschaft* by saying that England possesses a *Seeherrschaft*, a dominion over the seas. This is another case where German thought is fogged by the use of an abstract term—you throw about the word *Herrschaft*, and that dispenses you from the obligation to envisage clearly the real facts of the case. When the English sing in their old popular song that "Britannia rules the waves," they are presumably conscious that they are using only a poetical figure. Power at sea does not mean that the seas become a domain over which the Govern-

ment of some particular country can exercise authority as it can over the country itself, or over other countries which are under its overlordship or suzerainty. Power at sea simply expresses the relative strength of one sea-going nation against another. All nations which have any ships of war have *some* sea-power: the sea outside territorial waters is not the private domain of any of them, but within the seas which are common there are relative degrees of strength. To ascribe *Herrschaft* to the strongest Power is to use a poetical figure. There is no harm necessarily in using poetical figures, but when a figure has the power of exciting certain passions, which the bare facts might fail to excite, its use may become dangerous.

The possession of greater strength at sea implies the ability to do certain things at sea, even if the weaker Power tries to prevent, and conversely to prevent the weaker Power doing things at sea which it wants to do. It is not dominion over an area which is always being exercised, like dominion over a country, but a power to do certain things which comes into exercise only in certain contingencies. These contingencies are war or the danger of war. Great Britain, before the war, was the strongest Sea-Power, because it had the most powerful navy and conveniently placed naval stations on the routes of the world. But its power was a mere latent potentiality; it exercised no monopoly of the seas.

The Germans, when they call England "the tyrant of the seas," base the charge exclusively upon the measures taken, as a necessary part of war, to blockade the Central Powers—measures which unhappily involve some inconvenience and privation for neutral Powers. But reflective people, even in Germany, know that to talk about England's "sea-tyranny" before the war is nonsense.

"The 'freedom of the seas'" (writes a Socia Democrat) "was never called into question in peace-time; mercantile navigation was not hampered by any restrictions, and the English were the last people in the world to think of imposing any—not only because the freedom of the seas is an integral part of the British Free-Trade system and is the only policy which corresponds with England's permanent economic interests, but because any other policy would have united all the other nations against England, and *English* statesmen are too clever for that."*

English statesmen, not German!—that is what the writer means.

"This catch-phrase (the freedom of the seas) has, no doubt, a compelling sound, but that does not dispense us from the necessity of attaching some clear meaning to it. Before the outbreak of the present war England was uncontested mistress of the seas. In Gibraltar, Aden, Singapore, etc., countless ships of all nations anchored, and nobody was in the slightest degree troubled by the fact that these ports were English fortified places. The 'unfreedom' of the seas did not exist till the war. . . . In peace-time there is no

* Karl Emil in *Die Neue Zeit* for October 27, 1916, p. 94.

menace to it from the English navy. In order, on the other hand, that it might be assured in the case of any future war, England would have to be prevented permanently from building a strong fleet, and by means of it utilizing the advantage secured to it by its geographical position as the bar of the North Sea. . . . If, therefore, the expression 'freedom of the seas' means anything at all, it means the complete political annihilation of England for all time, and anyone who seriously champions the phrase takes the same sort of ground as those crazy English fire-eaters who clamour for a destruction of Germany."*

It is true, of course, that if the strongest Sea-Power is drawn into war, it is able to do things which its enemy cannot prevent, and to prevent its enemy from doing things he would like to do. This is what British "sea-dominion" comes to. England is able, when involved in a war with Germany, to continue importing those food-stuffs and raw materials upon which its life depends, and to cut off almost the whole of Germany's imports. If Germany had a more powerful navy than it has, England's ability to import would be reduced and Germany would be better able to break any blockade. The line many German writers now take is to say: "Well, we don't object to England's continuing to be the strongest Sea-Power, only why should England want to be *so very much* the strongest? Why should England fly into hostility just because we tried to get a little nearer to her sea-power?"

* G. Eckstein in *Vorwärts*, December 15, 1915.

It is unquestionable that the thing which has really brought these two great Powers into collision is the decision taken by Germany in 1897 to create a navy which would make England's command of the sea precarious. The person most responsible for this decision was the Emperor William himself, and in the second degree his Chancellor, Prince von Bülow. "It was only to be expected that this important strengthening of our national power would rouse uneasiness and suspicion in England," the Prince writes in his own account of his policy.* He calculated on Germany's creeping into a position formidable to England by gradual advances, while he so far quieted British suspicions that they would never reach the striking-point till it should be too late. He takes credit to himself that his plan succeeded. "When it came to actual warfare, England discovered the distressing fact that . . . she had missed the right moment for crushing the rival she feared."†

According to this account, the authorities of the German Empire were perfectly aware, when they decided to make the German navy, that they were challenging England, and that England, according to the principles of that *Machtpolitik*, which German writers declare to be the true policy for States, would be bound to defend her position. This need

* Prince von Bülow, "Imperial Germany," p. 20.
† *Ibid.*, p. 38.

not have been a reason for renouncing the policy; the rulers of Germany might have been convinced that the interests of the Empire required that they should challenge England; but it does make all German anger with England, all the professed astonishment at England's enmity, singularly absurd. Determine, if you like, to deprive England of her present security, but do not affect any moral indignation if England takes counter-measures. In *Machtpolitik* all indignation is out of place, and, indeed, in Prince Bülow himself there is very little admixture of indignation. He has none of the "holy wrath" of his successor. There are certain passionate inconsistencies from which such men as he are saved by their complacent cynicism.

When, however, Prince Bülow claims that his policy has been justified by success, he is congratulating himself too soon. If, indeed, the war were to end in a victory for Germany, it would be shown that when Germany reckoned its own strength so great that it would be able to take on England as an enemy, as well as France and Russia, Germany had not rated its strength for the huge adventure too high. Prince Bülow might then say: "You have represented my policy as a failure because it provoked so strong a coalition against Germany. But I did so with my eyes open; I calculated that Germany was strong enough to beat England, and Russia, and France, all at once, and you see I was

right. Germany has beaten them, with Italy, and Japan, and America, and China, and other minor Powers thrown in." If, on the other hand, the war ends in defeat for Germany, it will be shown to what the momentous decision to challenge England, as well as France and Russia, taken by the Emperor and Prince Bülow in 1897, was bound to lead.

It is quite idle for German writers to say that Germany did not want to be equal with England on the seas, but only to diminish the disparity. For if one looks away from words such as *Seeherrschaft* to the facts, and realizes that sea-power is only a relative ability to do certain things in war-time, in spite of the enemy, and to prevent the enemy from doing certain things, one sees that a country's ability may be diminished to an extent fatal to it by an increase of an enemy's sea-power which still leaves that sea-power greatly inferior to its own. Germany would not have to make its navy equal to England in order to make it impossible for England to import the food necessary for its life and protect its coasts from attack—to say nothing of England's being made impotent to transport troops overseas. Even at present England's ability to import has been affected by German submarines, though not to a degree happily which compels England to yield, or weakens her power to strike. But the point at which England would be seriously endangered would be reached long before the

German fleet attained numerical equality with the British fleet.

Germans of the Tirpitz-Reventlow school often complain that Germany's naval position in the "wet triangle" (the Bight of Heligoland) gives it a very inferior power for offence at sea to that possessed by insular Great Britain. This is true; but, on the other hand, Great Britain is far more exposed from the point of view of defence. The Germans with their present naval power have been able here and there on several occasions to bombard the English coast, but England with all its naval superiority has never been able to get near the German coast. If the Germans had a navy even approaching the British in strength, London would be far more accessible to them than Hamburg is to the English to-day. Great Britain has been able to sweep German commerce off the seas and cut off Germany from nearly all imports. But to sweep German commerce off the seas, although it is to inflict serious economic loss upon the enemy, is not to inflict any mortal blow, as events have shown, and England, by itself, would never have been able to cut off Germany's imports. Germany's imports are cut off only because Germany has against it, not England only, but practically the whole of the rest of the world. Great Britain, it is true, is the strongest naval Power, but when Germans represent Great Britain as omnipotent at sea, and talk

about England's *Marinismus*, in order to excite odium against England, they are putting forward a myth. The power throttling Germany to-day is not the power of Great Britain alone. With the British navy are co-operating all the three navies of Europe which come next after the German, the navy of Japan, and now the American navy also. If England had flouted the whole public opinion of the world, had excited against itself such a coalition that the navy of Germany had been co-operating in 1914 with the navies now fighting alongside of the British, England might well have been throttled into unconditional surrender within a shorter time than this war has already lasted. England, as was said above, makes no claim to be independent of the good-will of the world.

Great Britain's powerful navy gave it power for attack overseas only in so far as it safeguarded the transport of land troops. For no serious attack on any country can be made by bombarding its coasts alone. The ability to transport troops is the great advantage which sea-power confers in war. But strength for attack obviously depends, not only on the ability to transport troops, but on having the troops to transport. And before 1914 the British Army was indeed "contemptible" in numbers, however splendid in quality, when set beside the armies of the great Continental Powers. The power, therefore, which Great Britain was concerned

to maintain in the world, the *Macht* which it strove to keep, as against the *Macht* which Germany wished to gain, was not one which any other of the Great Powers could reasonably represent as a threat to its life or as enabling England to exercise world-dominion.

Germans often declare that what they really want is not world-dominion, but security. Well, security is what we all want.

Let there be no mistake as to what exactly it is which Great Britain would surrender by the growth of German sea-power. It would surrender the power to protect its life, if Germany should ever wish to strike at its heart. Germany, if it had no fleet at all, would not be without the power to protect its life against Great Britain; at the most its overseas commerce might be temporarily suspended. This difference is due to the different geographical position of the two countries. Great Britain, did the fleet of Germany approach its own in strength, would be unable to import the food necessary to keep its people alive, if Germany wished to prevent it. Great Britain alone cannot cut off Germany's external food-supply: only Great Britain, and France, and Russia, and Italy, working together can do it. The German navy in 1914 had not, it is true, yet reached such a strength that in a war between Great Britain and Germany alone, Germany could have cut off Great Britain's food-supply, but this was

due to our having made immense exertions and in curred great expense in recent years to keep our fleet ahead of Germany's. England's security would be very much affected, either by Germany's plans for a future increase of its navy being realized or by Germany's obtaining control of naval stations on the North Sea whence it could, in Napoleon's phrase, "hold a pistol at England's breast," or, as a German writer of Count Reventlow's school recently put it, "hold England by the throat." From the time, therefore, that England had been made uneasy (as Prince Bülow admits was natural) by the increase of the German navy, it became a life-and-death matter for England that neither Holland, nor Belgium, nor Northern France, should come under German control. The German invasion of Belgium produced as inevitably the British declaration of war, as your catching a man by the throat produces on his part the action of seizing your wrist. That there can have been any people in Germany surprised or indignant at the British action is proof of the profound darkness enveloping the mind of Germans as to the international situation. As Professor Raleigh has ironically observed, with all Germany's expenditure on obtaining secret information, it seems as if the things the Germans never found out were the things which were matters of public knowledge.

CHAPTER III

THE COMPETING VIEWS IN GERMANY

No *motif* is commoner in the German press than the triumphant declaration of the unity of the German people in this war. Probably to understand the psychological significance of this one should conceive the Germans as perpetually conscious of the loss and humiliation brought upon the German people in the past by its disunion. National unity is not a matter of course as in England, but something hardly won and still precarious. It may have been a disquieting question how it would stand a violent external shock. Even if in recent years the old Particularist feeling which separated the constituent States had ceased to be a practical factor in international politics, new divisions had come up —division between political parties, division between classes, division between creeds, religious and secularist. And these divisions had apparently involved a much sharper antagonism than the analogous divisions in England, in consequence partly of the German tendency to run with more concentrated impetuosity head-down in some one direction,

partly of the more tight-drawn organization of German parties. The writer of a German review in *Das grössere Deutschland* (July 8) speaks of the "old party antagonisms with the old ruthlessness and unsparing vehemence" (*die alten Parteigegensätze mit der alten Rücksichtslosigkeit und schonungslosen Wucht*).

This quality of intestine strife is indeed stated by an eminent German philosopher, Paul Natorp, in a book published last year, to be a consequence of the highly developed spiritual constitution of the German people.

"It is" (he says) "the most richly endowed people (*geistigste Volk*) for whom it must be hardest to attain to inner union and thereby to an external unity of political organization. Such a people has the richest, deepest, gravest contradictions to harmonize in itself."*

"It is a true observation" (he says later on, p. 31) "that we Germans have been left far behind by the other peoples which have been in their day the leading peoples of the West, both in the matter of internal political unity, and the clearness and security of our position in the world. That is the defect of our quality —but a defect it is."

And then, when the war came, the German people closed its ranks in a way which had seemed almost too good to hope for. When the Germans insist upon their unity, they are insisting upon something that is wonderful because it is new, and precious

* Thimme's "Vom Inneren Frieden des deutschen Volkes" (Leipzig, 1916), p. 26.

because it is perishable. Up to now their disunion has kept them back in the race; now, if the unity can only be preserved, they think they have their chance. But already, in contrast with the first phase of the war, when the nation was welded in the single flame of an exuberant emotion, ominous rifts are appearing. Not only, as we shall see, at the old places.

"A new antagonism—one hopes only a transient one—has grown up between town and country, between consumers and producers."*

There is a widespread resentment among the populations of the towns at what is believed to be the selfishness of the countrypeople in retaining agricultural produce while they are at the point of starvation. We find the Bavarian Minister for the Interior attempting to deal with this estrangement by official order:

"District officials must be careful not to confine their energies to preventing unjust barriers arising between town and country; they must actively encourage the flow of food-stuffs from the country to the towns by all the means in their power," etc.†

The writer of an article in the (Socialist) *Münchener Post* said last summer that he had paid a visit to certain country districts in Bavaria and entered

* *Das grössere Deutschland*, July 8, 1916, p. 894.
† *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, July 9, 1916.

into conversation with peasants about the supply of food to the towns. They were very talkative on the subject.

"One man said the situation had arisen because the townspeople had become too big for their boots, shopkeepers had become used to gorging themselves every day and all day on the finest bread in the best restaurants, but now they were glad to say 'Thank ye kindly' for a bit of dry crust. . . . Provided nobody went hungry in the country, it didn't matter if the town wasted to skin and bone."*

Vorwärts (June 11, 1916) printed a letter written by a farmer to his son in the trenches, which contained the following sentences:

"We have plenty of everything for ourselves, whatever it may be. The townspeople are making a great outcry, not only for potatoes, but also for butter, eggs, and bacon. All they want is good food for little money. . . . We have enough of everything and can send you parcels just the same as last year. . . . You needn't show this letter to any townsman, so as not to make bad blood."

The old antagonism again between North and South in Germany, which the first enthusiasm of the war seemed to have abolished, has been revived by the pressure of the blockade. Especially in Bavaria there seems to be a growing feeling that Bavaria is not fairly treated by the Central Pur-

* Quoted in the *Leipziger Volkstimme*, July 10, 1916.

chasing Association of the Empire and the Imperial Corn Office in the distribution of food. In North Germany the impression prevailed last summer that Bavaria was well supplied with every kind of food, with the consequence that Germans rushed in masses to the holiday resorts in that country. The Bavarian Government, on the other hand, was not able to assure the feeding of all these visitors. The prohibitions imposed by the South German States upon the export of food to the North has caused irritation in Prussia. We find also complaints raised in Saxony as to the unfairness of the Imperial (*i.e.*, Berlin) authorities in the matter of food distribution, and complaints in the West (Cologne) on a similar score. Again, the fiscal question, as well as the food question, is likely to cause friction between the States and the Empire, the States being very jealous of their monopoly of direct taxation, whilst the Imperial Government, if it fails to obtain indemnities from the enemy, shows signs of intending to impose direct taxation, as indeed it would be forced to do.

Yet if there is anyone in the countries opposed to Germany inclined to look with unfriendly eagerness for traces of the old Particularist feeling in Germany in the hope of seeing Germany break up of itself, he is no doubt destined to disappointment. Even if the old divisions of feeling are still to some extent there, they are overborne by the general consciousness of

what all Germans gain by their unity. There may be points of internal friction and disputes, but none so far which seriously impairs the solidarity of Germany against the foreign enemy. Yet we may allow that they mean lines of weakness in the structure, cracks which might turn to fissures in certain contingencies. As was seen last August, political partisans may still find it serve their purpose to turn them to account. The Jingoes at that time, believing that the Prussian Imperial Chancellor with the Central Government of the Empire was persisting in a policy of ineffectual moderation, fixed their hopes upon the King of Bavaria, who had given evidence of a more ambitious temper. They began to cry up the "Federal States" against a supposed undue forcing of the "Imperial Idea."* It was a transient phase, but it shows how the old Particularism, if at present it counts for little, is not quite dead, and might under certain conditions be revived. No doubt the attempt of an outside Power to revive it would have the opposite effect to the one intended.

We have seen how before the war German ambitions consisted rather in a number of floating ideas than in a fixed programme. By the process of the war the German visions of the future have had limits put to them and gained in definiteness. It is frankly admitted that "much which enthusiasts in Germany hoped for at the beginning of the

* See *Berliner Tageblatt*, August 16, 1916.

war will not be obtained in the war."* But this does not mean unity of opinion. The fact that old vague visions have become solidified in a variety of programmes has meant rather the clash of controversy. German plans for the future are now governed by four leading conceptions—the Freedom of the Seas, Central Europe, Berlin-to-Bagdad, and a Colonial Empire. All the four ideas are not held in all circles: different circles present different combinations of them, and even where they are held all four, the emphasis is differently distributed. The public discussion of "war-aims" (*Kriegsziele*) was indeed for long forbidden by the Government. But the prohibition was somewhat arbitrarily applied, and while speakers and writers generally refrained from indicating precise terms of peace, they could go a good way in describing the world as it was to be after the German victory. And now the prohibition seems to have been in practice dropped altogether. It is felt, indeed, in certain quarters, that the clash of programmes is *a weakness*. The well-known Dr. Helmolt, author of the "World's History," published last May an article on this very subject. Dr. Helmolt pleaded that liberty should be given to the discussion of war-aims, so that the "issues might be clarified," whilst people should abstain for the time being from running hard-and-fast rival programmes against each other.

* *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung*, May 11, 1916.

"Of the naïve extravagance of the first months, the idea that we must keep and incorporate all the territory we occupy—if need were, by violently transplanting unfriendly populations—of that we are certainly all cured and purged by this time, even those who are helping to conquer these territories with their blood. But the extreme limit of our agreement is that the *status quo ante* must not be restored. Beyond that, views diverge widely in all directions. Complete unanimity, of course, we shall never have: we have become too 'German' for that. But some sort of a *communis opinio* must be established, if for no other reason, because it will be needed to stiffen the backs of our statesmen at the peace negotiations."*

On the other hand, some Germans prefer to see in these controversies a mark of *strength:*

"Never has the nation's will to live manifested itself more mightily. The direction of this will is common to all of us. Real guarantees are the foundation of everything in our schemes of the future. Our fight as to the structure to be reared upon them is in truth no civil war, no sign of weakness; it is nothing more nor less than the outward form of the creative superabundance of a nation which England had condemned to languish."†

Let us take the four cardinal ideas in order:

1. *The Freedom of the Seas.*—The "freedom of the seas," as a phrase well-sounding but without any definite meaning, is one which lends itself to

* *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung* for May 20, 1916, p. 511.

† Richard Fester in *Deutsche Politik* for August 18, 1916, p. 1453.

the purposes of popular agitation. It may sometimes be used to mean something quite definite—an international agreement to abolish the right of belligerents to capture private property at sea in war-time. Freedom of the seas in this sense is capable of exact legal definition; whether it would be an arrangement fair all round, whether it could ever be enforced in the actual stress of war, may, of course, be disputed. But when the Germans use the phrase they mean generally a great deal more than this. They mean the acquisition by Germany of such an amount of sea-power as would render it more able, in the event of war, to threaten the English coast, to break England's oversea connexions, and to secure its own oversea connexions against British attack. This involves two things—an increase of the German navy which would bring it near the British navy, and the possession of ports on the coast of the North Sea and on the great trade-routes of the world. By the ports on the North Sea Antwerp is principally meant and the other Belgian ports, but Calais and various French ports may sometimes be included. It is obviously essential to this plan that Germany should retain complete possession of Belgium, if not of Northern France. This is the design of that vociferous party in Germany who inscribe the freedom of the seas, as the main German war-aim, upon their banners.

Count Reventlow, lecturing to the *Institut für Meereskunde*, gave a brief statement of his gospel, which, in the abridged report, runs as follows:

"If any practical meaning is to be attached to the phrase 'freedom of the seas' it can only be a question of the freedom of the seas *in war-time*. In peace, freedom of the seas is something which has gone without saying, ever since the cessation of piracy. England has hypnotized the world with the greatest success into the belief that the freedom of the seas is secured through the English fleet. As a matter of fact, Great Britain *has* placed itself after every war with a great deal of noise and circumstance at the head of the international demands for the furtherance of humanity, civilization, etc., has championed the freedom of the seas, and worked for its embodiment in official instruments; but it is no less a fact that during each war in which England was in any way concerned it contemptuously thrust aside all agreements and declared that the interests of Great Britain—and, therefore, of course, the good of mankind—imperatively demanded such and such modification and abolition of previous agreements. This is just what we have seen happen in this war. The freedom of the seas is, therefore, essentially to be secured in war-time, and in this case there can, of course, be no general security; it can be secured for us only so far as we secure it for ourselves in such a way that any other Power shall be deterred from the intention of closing the seas to us, or hindered if it tries to do so. England knows well enough that we can only have the freedom of the seas when we can secure it by our own strength."*

* *Kreuz-Zeitung*, January 16, 1916, morning.

Of course, all Germans would say they wanted the "freedom of the seas," but they do not all desire that Germany should acquire ports on the North Sea or retain Belgium. Some Germans may mean no more by the "freedom of the seas" than the modification of existing international law we described just now: many, perhaps, connect no clear idea with the phrase, except that somehow England is to be prevented from again interrupting Germany's oversea commerce in future wars. The party who set the "freedom of the seas" in the first place are never tired of pouring scorn on these vague hopes: no agreement between Powers as to the laws of war at sea would hold for a minute, they cry over and over again, if it conflicted in war with the exigencies of England or be worth the paper it was written on. It is mere muddled thinking not to see that the only real "freedom of the seas" is equivalent to *Germany's sea-power* in solid actual fact, and that Germany's sea-power means the retention of Belgium and the North Sea ports. The party we describe coincides practically with the set of people commonly called Pan-German. They carry on the doctrine of the *Flottenverein* (Navy League) which was so active in the years before the war. According to existing political divisions, they embrace, roughly speaking, the Conservatives—*i.e.*, the Prussian Junkers, whose class counts for so much in Service circles and in high politics, and the bulk of

the National-Liberals, representing certain of the big manufacturing and shipping interests. It is Herr Ballin, the Hamburg shipping magnate, who has given the Sea-Power party two of its watchwords—"Forth from the wet triangle!" (*i.e.*, as was explained, the Bight of Heligoland, Germany's only outlet for an offensive at sea) and "Our field is the world." This last phrase can be played against those whose idea is a self-sufficient Central Europe. Foreign imports, they insist, are indispensable to Germany in the long run, even if Germany can make shift to do without them temporarily in time of war. At any suggestion of the creation of a Central Europe which could supply its own needs from within a sphere bound together by continuous land communications, the Pan-Germans grow restive, and, in fact, sedulously make it plain that Mitteleuropa ought at the best to have only a secondary place in schemes of the future; the Central Europe Idea may even become mischievous if it diverts attention from the main thing—sea-power. They were no less alarmed when the German Colonial Minister, Solf, intimated last June* that if Germany got the big colonial empire it wanted, it could afford to cease from the competition with England upon the seas, that any extension of German sea-power beyond its present measure was not a vital necessity and might be

* *Weser Zeitung* for June 27 and 28, 1916.

given up without serious loss. The outcry from Pan-German circles was frantic. Of course, colonies were very nice, and it went without saying that Germany must have a big colonial empire, but it was absurd to put colonies on the same footing with sea-power. Sea-power even without colonies would be a great deal, but colonies without sea-power would be worth nothing at all. Solf had to explain that he had been misunderstood.*

The hero of this party is Admiral Tirpitz. Its chief representative in the press is Count E. Reventlow, who writes in an Agrarian organ, the *Deutsche Tageszeitung*. Backmeister, who now edits the weekly *Das grössere Deutschland*, represents the National-Liberal contingent in the Pan-German aggregate. Vice-Admiral Hermann Kirchoff is also active with his pen in support of the same school. He explained their programme in a recent article:

"Germany's requirements come to this: it must stick to the position it has won at the south-west entrance of the North Sea (Antwerp) in order to hold England in check (*an der Leine zu halten*) from the Continent, and must acquire the Suez Canal. That international treaties, especially with unscrupulous and merciless Great

* See, too, the review of Delbrück's "Bismarcks Erbe" in the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung* (July 20, 1915). The reviewer disparages a colonial policy, as untrue to the principles of Bismarck, who made power *in Europe* the basis of everything. So, too, on November 23, 1915, the same paper has an article entitled "Europeo-Asian Fantasies," arguing that Germany's ambitions in the East may lead it away from its true sphere—the North Sea.

Britain, which for centuries has done violence to all other peoples, and in this respect will always remain what it is—that treaties at a pinch are nothing but scraps of paper—of that this war has yielded innumerable instructive examples of all kinds. Ideals of humanity are out of place in this connexion. Nothing but sheer power is any use. And we are in the best way to consolidate the power we have already gained by the deployment of further strength on land and sea. One thing we may say without qualification: any sort of so-called 'understanding with England' would be the first step to our downfall."

After the war, Kirchoff goes on to explain, Germany must see to it that the command of the Eastern Mediterranean is secured to it and its Allies by the creation of a new fleet, by the acquisition of naval stations and wireless stations. Raw materials could then be safely imported by way both of the Adriatic and the Ægean.*

For this school naturally, whose face is toward the West, toward the North Sea, *the* enemy is England, the Power which blocks the way. Russia lies far away from the path of their ambitions. With Russia—one has to use now a past tense in reference to the old autocratic Russia—they always hoped to be friends again, and showed a sensitiveness when hard words were used about Russia in the German press. Friendship with Russia, regarded as the other bulwark against Democracy,

* *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung* for April 20, 1916, p. 303.

has been traditional with the Prussian Conservatives. The *Kreuz-Zeitung*, the principal Conservative organ, the paper of the Prussian aristocracy and high army circles, has been notably tender to Russia throughout the war. But abuse of England, the "Vampire of the Continent," is Count Reventlow's main business in life. The only possible thing for Germany to do is to "hold England by the throat" from the North Sea ports, so that England, if eternally hostile, shall be eternally impotent. Some writers of the other school, which looks East, had argued that it might be possible to hold England in check by pressure upon the Suez Canal, the neck (*Genick*) of the British Empire. This attempt, however, to offer a substitute for the pressure to be exercised upon England in the North Sea is rejected with contempt by the advocates of sea-power.

"There is still one gross error haunting German heads. We gain, through and with our Allies, the advantages of the Berlin-Bagdad line, and that is considered enough. Let us (the cry is) turn to the South-East; we can then afford to be restricted on the West! We could then exert sufficient pressure out there upon English weak points. It would be a grievous error—a fatal error—to found the Freedom of the Seas upon any group of alliances. Do not let us be gulled by England and America into *talking* about the Freedom of the Seas *later on* after the war, but let us *now* resolutely apply geographical homœopathy and *act* according to its teaching. We are about to make irreversible decisions. We

wish to gain the Freedom of the Seas, and we can do so, but we can do it only through our own German strength."*

Another writer of the same school, Karl Graf von Holstein, writes in the *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung* for July 21, 1916:

"The enthusiasts for Central Europe say: 'We shall secure the same thing if a strong Turkey can put pressure on England's neck, the Suez Canal.' Well, there is a good deal of difference in practice between pressure upon the neck and pressure upon the throat (*Gurgel*), and also a good deal depends upon who exercises the pressure. With all respect for the military achievements of Turkey in this war, no one can deny that there is a mighty difference between the German Empire and Turkey. If peace is concluded without a complete crushing (*völlige Niederzwingung*) of England, let there be no mistake about it—England will remain our most dangerous foe as far ahead as we can see. . . ."

"Our vanquished enemies" (wrote Vice-Admiral Kirchhoff in the article quoted above), "and more especially Great Britain, weakened as it will be and no more the almighty Power of old, will, with its former colonies now joined closely to itself, stake everything in order to win back its former omnipotent position as a World-Power, as the World-Power *par excellence*. That is shown by the extreme hatred and avid jealousy of the whole English people, feelings which will outlast the war. It is not enough to say England *is* our enemy: England will *remain* our enemy, and remain such, one can at present say tranquilly, *for all time*. If England wants to come and make it up with us, well it may.

* *Kreuz-Zeitung*, January 16, morning.

And in the economic way it will come—because it must! For the rest one hopes that the hatred, which we have now happily come to understand better, will preserve us from any other unconditional 'understanding' with this antagonist."

For a view embodying such a programme, it is plain that a termination of the war which meant Germany's retiring on the West to the line of its old frontier, even if Germany suffered no territorial loss, would mean complete defeat. This the writers of the school are never weary of drumming into the German people. A peace without annexations, a peace on the *status quo* basis, would mean that Germany had made all its sacrifices in vain, that Germany was beaten, that England had come triumphantly out on the top. We shall see that this is quite the opposite to what is maintained by the school facing East.

2. *Central Europe* (*Mitteleuropa*).—The idea of a close union between the German Empire and Austria was not a new one in this war. It was naturally suggested by the old German Nationalism of the middle of the nineteenth century, and had connexions still farther back with the Holy Roman Empire. The new German Empire of 1870 arose, indeed, upon a Prussian basis in opposition to the old Empire with its centre at Vienna, yet it inherited much of the sentiment of the historic German Empire, and such sentiment easily lends itself to

the idea of reconstituting a great Central European realm, in which the different aggregates of German stock under the Hapsburg Crown may be reunited with the main body.

"The new idea of the *Reich* (Empire) as it was embodied in the new German Empire, grew up, it is true, in strong opposition to the idea of the old Roman *Reich* of German nationality, yet it was in the closest unbroken historical connexion with it for all that. The glamour and halo belonging to the words '*Kaiser*' and '*Reich*,' the resurrection of which was the point at issue in the whole struggle from the Wars of Liberation to 1870, are evidence of that."*

But traditional sentiment, though it so favours and glorifies the idea of Mitteleuropa, would hardly by itself have brought it within the field of present-day politics. This was done by two practical considerations. One was that of *Macht* (power). In the book which has given its most eloquent and popular expression to the idea, "Mitteleuropa,"† written in 1915 by Friedrich Naumann, ex-pastor, Christian social reformer, journalist, publicist, politician, the fundamental idea is that only large political complexes will be able to maintain themselves in real independence under the conditions of the future—a thesis practically identical with Seeley's

* An anonymous writer in the *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung* for October 23, 1916, p. 1358.

† An English translation, with the title "Central Europe," was published in 1916 (P. S. King).

in "The Expansion of England." The existing "World States" are the British Empire, Russia, and the United States, and all minor States are destined to be drawn sooner or later into a position of dependence upon one or other of the World States. The German Empire by itself is not large enough to hold its own.

"What in the last resort" (says another writer) "is this war being fought for? Not for Belgium, not for the French chain of fortresses, not for Poland, not for Lithuania and the Baltic provinces, not for the Italian Tyrol and Trieste, not for Salonica, but to settle the question: *Are there in the future going to be three World Nations or four?*"*

The other practical consideration pointing to Mitteleuropa is economic. It is connected with the conception, made current at the beginning of the nineteenth century by Fichte, of the "closed commercial State" (*geschlossener Handelsstaat*). The exigencies of war have acquainted Central Europe with the pain which comes to such States as Germany and Austria-Hungary were before the war, when foreign imports are cut off by an enemy commanding the seas. If only Central Europe could be made self-supporting, could produce within its own borders everything needful for its life, building tariff walls all round itself to shut itself in com-

* Paul Rohrbach in *Deutsche Politik* for 1916, p. 242.

mercially and shut out the rest of the world, what a position of splendid isolation that would be!

"Fichte, in his 'Closed Commercial State' already showed that the German soil could yield supply for every need, and the achievements of our modern chemical science have proved that we can produce substitutes for articles which we imagined ourselves under necessity to procure from abroad, if only we make thorough use and intelligent application of the products of our soil. We shall then need to resort to foreign countries for scarcely any of our fundamental requirements in the matter of food and clothing, since our woods produce fibres in abundance, which, if properly worked up, would prove superior to the finest cotton."*

Again, in the same periodical a writer, called Karl Jentsch, strikes a similar note of jubilant self-sufficiency. If Germany, instead of working to supply the foreign market, "doing slave-work for other peoples," would only concentrate its powers upon producing at home what it needs, it would be in a position of splendid independence. Germany might indeed feel that it was consulting its honour as well as its purse in supplying foreign peoples with the finer products of German technical skill, such as optical instruments and dyes. "But we don't desire to bandy blows with the English for the honour of supplying the Chinese with shirts. We can import finer products to the English and

* Heinrich Driesmans in the *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung* for May 4, 1916.

Dutch, and leave it to them to satisfy the demand of the negro world for low-quality goods." Cotton, of course, cannot be produced in Germany, but the Germans can do a good deal by limiting their consumption of cotton, and going back to the use of good, solid linen. "For the cultivation of flax the Russian districts now thrown open to us are admirably adapted." And so far from there being any ground for the ordinary complaint of England's sea-tyranny, England's power at sea *is a complete illusion.*

"We do not mean to speak of the defeats which our fleet is preparing for the English fleet; we simply ask what *good* does the English war-fleet do to English trade and economic life? None at all! Sea-dominion in earlier times was a reality; to-day it is an anachronistic delusion and an empty phrase."

England can indeed, at the moment, do a great deal of harm to other nations with its fleet, but it cannot prevent its own commerce going to pieces, and to injure other nations by means which injures oneself still more can hardly be called "sea-dominion," but mere mad rage. The fact is that England is an island, and knows its own weakness —that because it draws the greater part of its supplies from abroad, it can be starved out like a besieged city. War-fleets are quite incapable, under modern conditions, of securing trade.

"Now that we are at war with England, we are thankful, of course, to the Kaiser because, owing to his indefatigable and brilliant activity, we have got the fleet which we need for this war. We are also thankful to the English statesmen that through their folly they have compelled our fleet to show what incredible things it is capable of, and have given our sea-heroes the opportunity of winning deathless fame through marvellous deeds of prowess! But, for our *trade*, our war-fleet is just as incapable of doing anything as the English war-fleet is for English trade."*

This is an extreme form of the idea of German self-sufficiency. For the great majority of the champions of Mitteleuropa nowadays do not maintain that the *German* soil alone (even including the Austrian) would produce everything needful. It is obvious that if you are going to have a self-sufficient economic area, it is necessary that that area should be of considerable extent, and, therefore, while the champions of Mitteleuropa press for an economic union of the German Empire and the Hapsburg dominions as an essential step in the direction of constituting a self-sufficient area, they do not stop at that. Germany *plus* Austria-Hungary is the beginning only of a larger realm. The consideration of *Macht* also requires that the World State which is to confront the existing World States on equal terms should be larger than Central Europe in the narrow meaning of that term.

* *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung*, July 3, 1916.

With regard to Europe, Naumann's conception is that the great Central European block would exercise an attraction upon the smaller neighbouring States which would ultimately bring within its sphere all those not drawn into the British or Russian sphere. In the days to come there will be no really independent small States any more. In the first instance it is Belgium on the West and Poland on the East which are thought of as the appendages of Central Europe. But apparently a diversity of views exists among the supporters of the Central European Idea as to the precise frontiers of the new conglomeration in Europe. There are those who combine the Central European Idea with the Pan-German conception of the "freedom of the seas," and for these, of course, Belgium and Northern France would have to be incorporated. Others, without subscribing to the Pan-German view, might still regard Belgium as an eventual member in the Central European realm, or at any rate within the Central European, as opposed to the British, sphere of influence. Others belong to the party which desires a complete restoration of Belgian independence (*e.g.*, Delbrück). Hopes are occasionally expressed that even France and Italy might become members of the Central European block.

"Of the States with which we are now at war, France, we still go on hoping, will not be able to continue our enemy for ever. In Germany there is an absence of any

hatred for France. Whether the French on their side will yield to the influence of reason, remains to be seen. If they do, then the German and the French peoples, which are so close to each other in the sphere of the mind and the spirit, and economically supplement each other, might work together for the free cultural development of Europe."*

"Julius Kalinski, in an article in the *Internationale Korrespondenz* writes warmly of a coherent economic block which will include the countries of the Central Powers and their sometime Allies; and he invokes the Swiss, the Dutch, the Danes, the Italians, and the French in the most friendly way to join it."†

Herman Kranold, writing in the organ just quoted of the Social Democratic "Majority," the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, says:

"The interests of Islam coincide with those of the Central Powers (and the interest of these Powers is in reality a common European interest), to secure the independence of *the European Continent* against the English lust for dominion through the only possible means, a Central European economic fellowship (not in the narrowed form of the idea which has now become common, but in the form which has long been advocated by the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, according to which the Continental States in the west and the south are also drawn in)—a Central European economic friendship

* Heinrich Peus in the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* for August 17, 1916, p. 839. Also compare the pamphlet by Franz von Liszt reviewed in *Vorwärts*, May 23, 1915. "Italy too, when its feverish dreams are over, will gravitate to Central Europe" (*Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung* for March 11, 1916).

† *Vorwärts*, January 9, 1916.

extended to Asiatic Turkey, so that the Mediterranean becomes embraced as an inland lake. It is still too early to depict in its details the new economic map of the world. Its construction can only come about by degrees, according as the several nations recognize their interests and adhere voluntarily to the economic block which will secure their own development."

And the writer goes on to indicate that Italy, for instance, can never succeed as a colonial Power until it becomes a member of the Central European fellowship.*

The Social Democrat Jansson, in the "Trades Union War Book," writes:

"An alliance of peace from Lule-Elf to the Persian Gulf seems altogether within the sphere of what is economically possible."

Lule-Elf is the most northern river of Sweden, and so the Scandinavian countries are now drawn into the complex! The worst, the *Vorwärts* says, of these coherent economic blocks is that they inevitably come into conflict with other blocks.

"The block from Lule-Elf to the Persian Gulf might soon see itself confronted by a tariff union of the British Empire, an American block, a Russian block, and perhaps a Chinese-Japanese one, and it seems more than questionable whether such a state of things would conduce to the advantage of the working class."

But with regard to the prolongation of Central Europe to the South-East, opinion seems to be

* *Sozialistische Monatshefte* for May 31, 1916, p. 580.

unanimous. Practically all the champions of Central Europe to-day mean, not only Germany *plus* Austria-Hungary, but Germany *plus* Bulgaria *plus* the Ottoman Empire as well. This brings us to the *third* of the four cardinal ideas, the idea described usually by the phrase—

3. *Berlin-to-Bagdad.*—Only this long stretch of country from the North Sea to the Indian Ocean under predominant unifying German influence can give an agglomeration of power sufficient to meet the British Empire, Russia, and the United States on equal terms. Only this territory extending through many latitudes and yielding products of many kinds can secure economic self-sufficiency. This is the fourth great World-State, whose future glory and strength hundreds of German pens are busy to-day celebrating—besides all considerations of modern *Realpolitik*, the glamour of the Holy Roman Empire combined with the glamour of the Arabian Nights!

For the view which faces East, the main enemy who blocks the way is not England, but Russia. There is a tendency in the champions of Mitteleuropa *plus* Berlin-to-Bagdad to hope for an eventual *modus vivendi* with the British Empire, but with Russia—never! The chief exponent of this view is the well-known Imperialist writer, Dr. Paul Rohrbach. He has split away from the Pan-Germans who run the weekly *Das grössere Deutsch-*

land, and has been since the beginning of 1916 the principal editor of a new weekly paper, *Deutsche Politik*, devoted to the propagation of this particular gospel.

"Only unreflective people and chatterers" can suppose that Germany can keep abreast of the three World Nations without drastic measures. Germany has the lowest birth-rate of any of the great nations—an increase of something above 800,000 a year: this birth-rate is falling, and Germany's capacity for increase within its present borders will cease at no very distant date. Industry and trade can do something to maintain a few more millions on the existing area of the Empire, but more than half the area of the Empire is unsuitable for industry or a denser population (p. 244).

What, then, can Germany do? "The empty spaces of the world are already allocated; everywhere strong, young peoples are growing up in them, of whose subjugation or extrusion we cannot think and ought not to think." Besides, Germany has no adequate surplus population. Even if someone made Germany to-day a present of vast new lands for colonization, it would be too late now to catch up the start of the older World Nations (p. 246).

The sole expedient is the constitution of Mitteleuropa, the consolidated block of the Central Powers, together with Poland, but this, again, requires to

be supplemented by the Oriental block, and "the space between the two must be bridged over by drawing Bulgaria, the first Balkan Power, into a political, economic, and cultural association" (p. 246).

"This political fabric reaches from the North Sea and the Baltic to the Persian Gulf. It embraces from 140 to 150 millions of people. It includes countries which by more advanced development could maintain much larger populations than they do now. So soon as its resources are fully turned to account, it is capable of supplying almost all industrial raw materials and food-stuffs in abundance from its own soil. It, therefore, makes possible the institution of a world-wide economic system on the grand scale, a commercial and industrial system, free from all anxiety as to the danger of starvation in war. It is continuously accessible in all its parts through great lines of railway communication from end to end, and makes it possible from certain of its important frontier districts—Palestine, Persia—to exercise at need decisive pressure upon our most formidable enemies. It makes us completely independent of England's predominance upon the seas."

And in this complex, the eighty millions of Germans will have the determining voice (p. 246).

But right across this scheme strikes the age-long purpose of Russia. Since South Russia has become the great granary of the Empire, the Bosphorus and Dardanelles have acquired a new economic significance.

" Russia will fight for this end so long as it has strength enough and will enough left to bear in mind, even after a defeat, the guiding principle of its many hundred years of existence and growth. To renounce Constantinople and Gallipoli means for Russia to renounce the hope of any sort of future as a Great Power " (p. 9).

And after the war, when the Germans have established their position in Constantinople, Russia will have no alternative but either to acquiesce in a position of dependence, or renew the war over and over again. The new complex of the Central European Powers, Bulgaria, and Turkey, will have its hand upon Russia's most vital economic artery and could exert an instantly effective pressure at will. This is a geographical necessity. Even if the Germans wished to withdraw from Constantinople and Gallipoli, they could not do so without betraying their Turkish allies and imperilling their own safety.

There is thus no possible accommodation between Germany and Russia. Russia

" cannot do anything but fight against us to the last fibre of its political and military strength; if no longer in this war, then in the next; and if no longer in the next, then in the next after that."

The only course for Germany in this " fatal concatenation of circumstances " is to make the greatest possible weakening of Russia its abiding aim. This apparently inhuman conclusion is justified politi-

cally by the necessity of self-preservation, and it is justified morally by the consideration that

" from the beginning of human history to the present day the Russians are the only one among the great historical nations who have made no perceptible contribution to the sum of our moral and material civilization (*Kultur*). In that way the Russians have forfeited their right to carry through their plans for the maintenance of their own power to the disadvantage of other nations which have done incomparably more for the development of the human race, and are capable of doing yet more in the future " (pp. 10, 11).

The notion is frequently put forward in Germany to-day that Russia might gain its access to the sea on the Persian Gulf and need not in that case go on caring about Constantinople. It is, indeed, a favourite idea in some quarters. The school of Rohrbach treats it with scorn. A writer in *Deutsche Politik* (April 7), Axel Schmidt, examines it in an article entitled " Dardanelles, or Persian Gulf ?"

A country of Russia's geographical structure, he says, could never be satisfied with an outlet in the Indian Ocean. Its spine is constituted by the line of the Dnieper. Its economic development urges it towards the Mediterranean. The economic life of modern Russia is concentrated in European Russia. However rapidly Siberia may develop, the Ukraine will continue for long to be Russia's main granary, copper-mine, coal-field. The most perfect railway system could not make South

Russia's connexion with the open sea through the Persian Gulf economically profitable. The expenses of railway transport render it imperative for a country of the extent of Russia to have a door into the Mediterranean as well.

With England, on the other hand, Germany may hope to have ultimately a *modus vivendi*.

One must remember that the brigand has the quality of his defects. He recognizes when an enterprise turns out bad business. The English are not sentimental, and one may reasonably expect that their cold self-interest will lead them sooner or later to seek an understanding with Germany. And then neither need Germany cherish a sentimental desire to punish England; Germany, too, can follow the path of its interests and listen to the overtures of England grown wiser (pp. 6, 7).

"The vital question for England is its position in Egypt. We need only wait for the moment when an adequate railway line has been laid across Asia Minor and Syria to the Egyptian frontier, and the English will give up their game of disregarding German interests" (p. 7).

Germany then will do well not to rebuff England. It need even raise no objection to England's continuing to be a World Power (*England mag unseretwegen ein Weltreich bleiben*). But on this condition —that England must recognize beyond possibility of mistake that it has been thrashed.

"An unbeaten England we should not be able to utilize in the political construction of the future" (*ist in dem zukünftigen politischen Aufbau nicht brauchbar*) (p. 666). "I am quite misconstrued if I am credited with the idea that England could accept us as a strong Eastern Power in alliance with the Balkans and Turkey *without first recognizing that it is the weaker party and we the stronger*" (p. 294).

But England once ready to fall into this subordinate position, Germany need not have any more fears on that side. "If Germany comes out of this war undefeated at sea, its enemies can have no hope that in any future war they would be able to overtake its predominance in the field of technique and organization" (p. 340). Besides that, the new German-Turkish block would have Egypt at its mercy, and so be always able to squeeze England in a vital place—"a point of pressure (*Druckpunkt*) from which we could make ourselves felt at the nerve-centre of England" (p. 8). Germany would thus have a grip which would secure England's inoffensive behaviour.

This gospel of Mitteleuropa *plus* Berlin-to-Bagdad appeals to a somewhat different section of German opinion than the Pan-German Sea-Power Idea. The main supporters of the latter, as we saw, were the *Junker* Conservatives and the big armament-makers and shipping magnates. Mitteleuropa *plus* Berlin-to-Bagdad appeals more to the Liberal and

"Moderate" elements in Germany. The enthusiasts for Central Europe, one gathers, belong mainly to the educated middle class, the more Liberal sort of professors, the great mass of people whose view of politics is more theoretical than practical, determined more by imagination and sentiment than the experience of affairs—and people of this kind form in any country a very large part of the readers of newspapers. The "Majority" Socialists, representing a great body of organized working-class opinion, are, generally speaking, warm believers in the Mitteleuropa gospel. A view which made Russia, rather than England, the enemy was naturally, before the Russian revolution, more congenial to the Liberals, just as the reverse view commended itself to those who hated Democracy.* Besides this, it involves what seems a less ambitious programme. It does not necessarily involve any great change upon the map as it was before the war. The Pan-German programme which, to use Harden's description, "would grab Belgium, Northern France, Briey and Belfort, Poland, Lithuania, Volhynia, Courland, the two Serbian kingdoms (*i.e.*, Serbia

* The principal review of the "Majority" Social Democrats, the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (fortnightly), puts Mitteleuropa in the forefront. Curiously, in this case, devotion to Mitteleuropa has been combined with the view that England, *not Russia*, is the enemy. A number of writers had been carrying on a campaign in this organ in favour of ultimate friendship between Germany and (autocratic) Russia. The old Socialist attitude towards Russia, they maintained, must be quite given up.

and Montenegro) and bits of the Dobrudja and Wallachia," would show conspicuously on the map. But if Germany formed a close federation with Austria-Hungary, retained its hold upon Bulgaria, and developed its influence upon Turkey into a virtual dominion, a great new Power would have come into existence, of which the map might show nothing. The fact (supposing the map, as it was before the war, restored in its entirety) that at one point, where Roumania touched Serbia, a little band of territory severed Bulgaria from Hungary would not count for much, if on one side of it was a strong Central European Federation and on the other side a Bulgaria and Turkey dominated by Germany. Such a minute barrier would disappear in a moment, whenever the new Germany, strong on both sides of it, wished to link up her stretch of power.

Whereas, therefore, the Reventlow-Backmeister school are always crying that if the war ends without annexations Germany will have been beaten, that an "inconclusive" peace would mean a triumph for England, the Rohrbach school insists that for England it all turns upon whether she can break the alliance between Central Europe and Turkey. "If she does so, the English World Power is saved; if she fails to do so, England will never again be able to meet Germany on equal terms."*

* *Deutsche Politik* for February 11, 1916, pp. 291, 292.

"England's poor prospects will not be substantially changed even if the war (instead of ending in a German victory) has what, according to English ideas, would be an 'inconclusive' end. If the English want to go on holding Egypt and India securely, and save themselves from the German submarine menace, their conquest of us must be pushed so far that we lose our connexion with the Near East, that we are unable to prevent Turkey's being dismembered in the interests of England and the other Entente Powers, and have to put up with permanent restrictions upon our building and using of submarines. When England has achieved all that, then, and not a moment sooner, will she have won. If at the conclusion of peace she has failed to achieve all this, then, according to her own confession, she will have lost the war. . . . It has taken an astonishingly long time for the whole of England—or, at any rate, for the majority of the English people—to recognize the true state of the case."*

"The main ganglion of the British Empire is Egypt and the Suez Canal. If Turkey comes out of the war a strong State and provides itself with railways, England can never go on holding Egypt with 6,000 European soldiers. And if England loses the Canal, all the bands connecting its Empire are loosened. Even the Central Government in London might grow insecure, and what then?"†

Sometimes the champions of Mitteleuropa defend themselves against the strictures of the Reventlow school by urging that the Mitteleuropa to be secured

* *Deutsche Politik* for November 24, 1916, p. 2054.

† Hans Delbrück in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* for May, 1916, p. 383.

by *this* war is not intended to be anything finally satisfactory, but it is only the firm basis of a great world-power to be acquired later on:

"Even in quarters where the outlook is distinctly towards *Weltpolitik*, a certain mistrust has recently come to exist with regard to the idea of Central European Union, as if its achievement—or even the efforts directed to its achievement—might prejudice the great problems of the fight for the highroads of the sea, participation in oversea traffic, and the active prosecution of a colonial policy by Germany. And it cannot be denied that there *are* adherents of Central European consolidation who suppose that by bringing it about they would have rounded off the main task of German *Weltpolitik*. Such views, however, are a misconception of what is struggling to the birth in the heart of Europe. The significance of Central European consolidation lies in this—that it is intended to furnish, and will furnish, a *minimum* guarantee of the power of the peoples of Central Europe among the nations of the world, a broad, firm basis for activities, political and economic, otherwise impossible, extending to the outside world, even beyond the limits of Europe."*

So, too, Rohrbach:

"Unless we make ourselves a strong colonial people, the world will end by becoming Anglo-Saxon. In this way even our policy in the Near East is only the *preliminary* of German colonial policy in the sense of a policy with a world-wide outlook (*Ueberseepolitik im weltpolitischen Sinne*). Nothing is more wrong than to

* *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung* for March 20, 1916.

represent the Near East Idea and the Colonial Idea as *rivals*; it is a question of both."*

4. The last of the four cardinal ideas which govern German visions of the future is the *Colonial Idea*. This has practically come to mean the idea of a great German Empire in Central Africa, stretching from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic. It would come about if Germany recovered East Africa and acquired the Belgian Congo State as well. Few German writers have any hope of recovering the islands in the Pacific; and Tsingtao has, I think, been almost universally given up for lost. Besides that, it is a familiar thought in Germany that the great fault of the German Colonial Empire before the war was that it dissipated German energies over a number of separate bits of territory in different parts of the world without any close interconnexions; what is wanted is a large *continuous* tract—a "German India in Africa," to use Delbrück's phrase in his book "Bismarcks Erbe."†

"I will not argue" (says Dr. Paul Leutwein, whose activities have been associated with German South-West Africa), "I will not argue with those who on national grounds look for the recovery of all our old

* *Die Hilfe*, May 25, 1916, p. 343.

† "In place of the division of forces which has hitherto marked our colonial policy, there must come the construction of a compact African Empire with the possibilities of defence upon the spot, which will be able to yield a part of its raw material to our home industries" (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, September 1, 1915).

Colonial Empire. Who could fail to feel sympathy with them? It is still, however, too early to say what gages we shall need in order to get a concession of our claims from our principal colonial antagonist. We do not know yet for certain if German Central Africa will ever become a reality.*

The reasons for which colonies are wanted are the same for which Berlin-Bagdad is wanted—*i.e.*, (1) *Macht*, (2) economic self-sufficiency. If Germany gets once more any colonies in Africa, the intention is not to leave them as defenceless as they were at the outbreak of this war. They are to be held by much more considerable forces—European and black troops trained and officered by Germans—and crammed with munitions. Then, even if communications with Germany are again broken, the colonies will be able to conduct their own defence for longer than any European war could last. Even in their relatively "defenceless" condition they have cost the British, the Boers, and the French a fair amount of blood and trouble to conquer; but, as they would be equipped in the future, it would be a very different proposition. A German African Empire, armed to the teeth—as comfortable an element in the Africa of the future as Germany itself has been in Europe!

But while the consideration of *Macht* is perhaps the real operative motive, it is mainly the economic

* *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung* for April 20, 1916, p. 301.

necessity of African dominion upon which stress is laid in public utterance. Even Asia Minor and Mesopotamia would not supply all that was needed for German industries—rubber, for instance; and if the German block is to be really self-sufficing, it must be Central Europe *plus* Turkey *plus* an African Empire. That Germany needs many tropical products as raw material for its industries is indeed too obvious to dispute; the Colonial party insists that Germany can never secure its supply of these tropical products, except by exercising sovereignty over tropical lands.

The Colonial Idea forms a sort of corollary both to the *freedom of the seas* and to *Central Europe plus Turkey*. There are not many apparently in Germany who lay the chief stress upon the colonies. The Reventlow school are rather concerned, as we saw, to insist that if Germany has sea-power, the possession of colonies would be thrown in as a matter of course, but that without sea-power colonies would be no good at all. The colonies, therefore, are seen, from this point of view, as dependencies bound firmly to the Empire by waterways which Germany could hold in defiance of England. On the other hand, the Central European school urge that Germany would be brought by a land-route so much closer to its African colonies that it would, in a future war, be able to give them much more effectual help. If the extremer hopes

of the Central European school were realized, Turkey would recover its old dominion over Egypt and the Eastern Sudan, driving out the English; and since Turkey is to be a member of the Central European block under German control, the block would then be in immediate *land* connexion, by way of the Nile, with the German African Empire.* Even if, however, the English retain Egypt, Germany in Mesopotamia and Arabia would be much nearer to its African colonies and could communicate with them more easily than at present.

We have described the four ideas which in different combinations constitute the competing German programmes. To a large extent it is a matter of different emphasis, yet those who lay the emphasis on one of the ideas are apt to be jealous of the competition of the others. All the four ideas have come in for a good deal of criticism in Germany.

The programme of the Reventlow school with its strong Annexationist character has been attacked by the people opposed to annexations. The con-

* See an article by A. Dix in the *Tag*, quoted in *Vorwärts*, June 5, 1915: "Through Egypt the road leads up the Nile into the heart of Africa, into those regions which interrupt continuity between the German colonies in East and West Africa. Egypt and its hinterland again in the possession of Germany's ally, Turkey—in the heart of Africa those possibilities of German lines of communication, so much talked of before the war, actually realized—on the political horizon of the future we see the image of the Cape-Cairo-Singapore line grow pale, and another image arises, Hamburg-Damascus-Lüderitz Bay [German South-West Africa]!"

troversy began in 1915, when certain Social Democrats of the "Majority" (the "Majority," one may notice, is not all against annexation) stood up in the Reichstag to declare that the German occupation of Belgium and Northern France must be regarded as temporary only; but since this controversy is part of the battle which has raged round the person of the Chancellor, we had better defer the discussion of it till we come to speak of that battle.

"Central Europe" has met with opposition or cold water from three quarters. Firstly, there is the section more narrowly Prussian in outlook, which does not like the idea of the Prussian type becoming blurred in a nondescript "Central European" type. Amongst these are the Agrarians, *Junkers*, who do not like the idea of closer competition in the home market with the corn-growers of Austria and Hungary. Freiherr von Wangenheim, the President of the *Bund der Landwirte*, uttered a public warning, when the Mitteleuropa campaign became rife in the early part of 1915, against forcing the pace to a degree incompatible with the actual interest of Germany and Austria-Hungary. The Conservative Freiherr von Zedlitz, speaking in the Prussian House of Representatives, referred to the ideas of Naumann as "emotional pictures" (*Stimmungsbilder*) and said that the difficulties of the task were not to be overcome by such means, that the greatest

caution and sobriety of judgment were necessary. Count Reventlow gives a kind of grudging patronage to the idea so long as it is kept in due subordination. We may take a speech of his on "*Seegeltung und Mitteleuropa*" reported in the *Alldeutsche Blätter* for April 29, 1916, p. 163.

"The Naumann-Rohrbach policy, which would cure all the ills of our time by means of *Mitteleuropa*, the speaker represented as inadequate. . . . 'We must wish for our statesmen the hardness of Bismarck; soft statesmen we have no use for. They must not let themselves be dazzled by *the phantom idea of a Mitteleuropa*, which we might very well create and elaborate, but which cannot take the place of Sea-Power for us.'"

Brandenburg, the Prussian historian, in a book published in 1916, "Die Reichsgründung," expressed himself as follows:

"The history of the foundation of our Empire . . . warns us urgently against repeating any of those unhappy experiments which almost shipwrecked our life as a State half a century ago. . . . Let our frontiers be pushed forward as far as our future security requires and our power makes the defence of them possible: these outside territories must have no influence upon the inner fabric of our State, unless a time comes when they themselves have grown into the German type and thereby become capable of being members of a German national state. Let our relation to the Empire on the Danube be made as close as possible; yet we must not for the sake of this connexion sacrifice anything of the full independence of our home and foreign policy. The smaller Germany must remain that which came into

being in 1871, unless we want to bring upon ourselves over again all the struggles and the bewilderments which our fathers went through."

"Mitteleuropa" (sighs a devotee of the idea)—"how few believed in this vision of the future before the war, how many still doubt to-day! Those who confound (a narrow) Nationalism with (the true) National Ideal [*i.e.*, the Pan-Germans], those who call themselves good 'Europeans' [*i.e.*, cosmopolitan pacifists], and those who regard the Bismarckian foundation of the Empire as something altogether final and self-subsistent."*

When Naumann's book came out, this is how the Krupp paper, the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung*, reviewed it:

"Like all the books of Naumann, this, too, is well written and full of new ideas; but this book, too, is not free from that abstract political idealism through which Naumann's political mission, as leader of the National Socialists, came to grief. That on purely military grounds the union between Austria-Hungary and Germany must take on a closer form can be plainer to nobody than it is to the German Army. But Naumann treats us, further, to some 'music of the future,' in contemplating a sort of amalgamation of the two Empires. Germany, Prussia, etc., are to disregard their several peculiar individualities, which are being developed in the course of the centuries, and constitute themselves a single Central European organism. The Central European, therefore, stands above the German. We believe we are in no error when we assert that this

* *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung* for October 23, 1916, p. 1359.

idea will be repudiated by the widest circles of our people. That the economic and military relations should take on a closer form is quite thinkable, but the peculiar individuality of Prussia-Germany—to wish to sacrifice that for the sake of an imaginary Central Europe means that one has lost all contact with realities. We believe, on the other hand, that the future of Central Europe is best secured if Prussia-Germany comes out of this war so strong as to take a predominant position in Central Europe in such wise that an alliance with us should be desired by others quite spontaneously. We do not wish to turn the whole course of development till 1866 upside down, and stultify the work of Bismarck. The solution of the Central European Question must be settled from the Little-German—that is, from the Prussian—point of view."*

A still more striking indication of the spirit which fights against any proposal to subordinate the narrow German National Idea to any conception of European solidarity—of the spirit, in fact, prevalent in Service circles—is to be found in the breezy letter with which Admiralitätsrat Georg Wislicenus responded to an invitation to give his support to the new periodical of "Moderate" Mitteleuropa complexion, the *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung:*

"BERLIN,
"*March* 31*st*, 1916.

"Honoured Gentlemen of the Editorial Board of the *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung*,—Under *no* circumstances may you count upon my co-operation;

* *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung*, November 26, 1915, third edition.

I am indignant, indeed, that you should think of asking such a thing of me.

" People capable, like you, at such a time as this, of babbling about ' the feeling for the oneness of humanity raised almost to the degree of knowledge,' have as little understanding for the spirit of 1914 as your most honoured Herr Professor Dr. Jaffé, whose phrase—wholly unintelligible to me—about ' immutable human ends ' is no doubt intended to express *European* wisdom. The Herr Professor forgets the little detail that a wild horde of devils and fools has sprung at the throat of us peaceable Germans. We have, therefore, good enough reason to confine within due limits the ' immutable human ends ' of the bestial Russian droves who slaughter and burn, of the villainous, black-lying *Baralong* murderers, and all the rest of the riff-raff of brigands banded against us. ' European ' now means ' anti-German '; those who ' give the tone ' to Europe, the British Lords, the Russian Grand Dukes, their French, Italian, Portuguese and other flunkeys, are our enemies for many generations to come, open or secret, according as they are more or less the low-down lot they are. We are at war with Eastern and with Western Europe, and there is not much love lost between us and the small States of North and South Europe. Where, then, is the necessity for a *European* periodical ? That is something which we Germans could well dispense with.

" You may bet our European enemies—robbers and scoundrels for the most part—are not printing any *European Political and Economic Review*, though it is they, with their desires all tugging different ways, only held together artificially by crude greed and low-down hatred, who should really be much more in need of such a thing than we Germans. What we have got to learn is to set the *oneness of Germanism* as something immu-

table above the devilish aims of the European robber crew. May the spirit of 1914 make the much too mild, much too humane, German harder and rougher—yes, indeed, and much more self-seeking: eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth! Our enemies must be made afraid of us, our enemies who wanted to exterminate us and would still exterminate us, if they could, and not be squeamish about the means either.

"So change your title. 'European' means 'anti-German'—and I give you credit for not wanting to be that, in spite of all your washy, nondescript 'happiness of humanity' yearnings.

"In order to afford you an opportunity of stating your case, I willingly give you leave to publish this letter in your paper, and beg in that case that a copy be sent me.

"With all possible respect,
"Georg Wislicenus,
"*Admiralitätsrat.*"

The second quarter from which the Mitteleuropa Idea met with a chilling reception was a part of the business world, who examined the proposal for a closer association between Germany and Austria-Hungary in its economic aspect and found it unsound.

Herr von Gwinner, "Chief Director of the Deutsche Bank and Germany's foremost financier,"* said that "none of the new proposals which see our goal in the Near or Farther South-East can for Germany be a substitute for the vitalizing North-Western movement."

* Mr. F. W. Wile, "Who's Who in Hunland," p. 61.

The *Frankfurter Zeitung*, representing the views of the German financial world and in close touch with the Foreign Office, had a remarkable series of articles in May, 1916, in which it was argued that it would be absurd to think that imports from Germany into Austria-Hungary could ever compete with imports from other countries, because, as a matter of fact, the bulk of those Austrian imports which to-day do not come from Germany consist of raw materials which Germany does not possess. Hence, it is declared to be utterly impossible to adopt the idea of retaining the existing tariff rates between Germany and Austria-Hungary as preferential rates, while building up high tariff walls against the rest of the world. Germany wants and must have a "world market"; she cannot sacrifice her "world-interests" to an Austro-Hungarian system of preferences; and what she most desires is low duties on her exports both to Austria-Hungary and to the rest of the world.*

Herr von Sydow, the Prussian Minister for Commerce, speaking on the subject in the Prussian Landtag on February 19, 1916, did so in a tone of cold reserve. He refused to commit the Government. A dangerous amount of sentiment entered into the question:

"Economic questions are not matters of sentiment, but of self-interest. We must first know the attitude

* *The Times*, June 8, 1916, p. 7.

of trade, commerce, and agriculture in Austria-Hungary to the project, and that is still hidden by a thick veil. We must, therefore, wait and see. . . . We must see to it that our intercourse with neutrals *and those States which are now our enemies* is not rendered difficult or impossible."

The utterances of von Sydow were generally regarded in Germany as an intentional damper on the Mitteleuropa campaign.

Similarly various economic specialists in Germany criticized the proposals of the Central European school adversely. The chief treatment of the question from the economic point of view is the book of composite authorship edited by H. Herkner.* Several of the contributors arrive at a negative conclusion. We may quote from a review of this book in *Vorwärts*:

"In short, the illusion that Central Europe, even with the addition of Bulgaria and Turkey, would be able to supply its own needs in the matter of cereals, independently of the world market, is one of those war-illusions which has been the most fundamentally overthrown by the publication of this book. . . . Eulenburg shows irrefragably that German industry has as good as no interest in a tariff rapprochement with Austria-Hungary. . . . Eulenburg comes to the conclusion that 'the presupposition for a Customs Union must be the economic strengthening of Austria-Hungary itself.' The alteration of commercial policy furnishes by itself no means for the intrinsic improvement of the Austro-Hungarian national

* "Die wirtschaftliche Annäherung zwischen dem deutschen Reich und seinen Verbündeten" (Berlin, 1915).

economy. On the contrary, the real task is 'the extension of the requirements of the people, the elevation of the productive forces of the country, the increase of capital in the industries of the country, and the greater efficiency of the whole economic system of the nation.' That is true not of Austria-Hungary alone. The foundation of economic development is not to be seen in an external policy of tariffs and world-power; far from that, such a policy is actually an impediment to the economic development of the country. Eulenburg is therefore of the opinion that a closer tariff union could yield no results, and would soon on both sides produce a grave disappointment which 'one would like to see avoided.'

"Many things may be done in detail, Eulenburg points out, to quicken and lubricate economic relations between the two countries, but above everything else it is necessary that such facilitation of economic relations between the two Central Powers should not be allowed to *prejudice their relations with other countries.* The basis of treaties of commerce, the Most-favoured-nation Clause, must be maintained, and international friction must be kept to the minimum. A self-enclosed economic region, like the ideal 'Mitteleuropa,' remains, therefore, one of the fantastic notions generated by the war."*

Thirdly and lastly, the idea has provoked a strong protest from the Social Democrat "Minority" (the Social Democrat "Majority" are, as we have seen, largely enthusiastic for it). The "Minority" opposes it, because the "Minority" remains faithful to the cause of Free Trade and international friendship, and, therefore, objects on principle to a pro-

* *Vorwärts*, March 6, 1916.

posal which means shutting off a sphere under German hegemony by tariff barriers from other countries.

"Preferential treatment is quite ruled out from the Social Democratic point of view, because it circumscribes freedom of intercourse, works powerfully towards Protection, and drives Russia, France, and Great Britain, as well as the United States of North America, into an open or secret economic war with Germany. These last-named States, however, have an infinitely greater importance for Germany than Austria-Hungary. Quite apart from considerations of business, such an economic war would be the best preparation for a new military war."*

But the *Vorwärts* is altogether in favour of improving the facilities of intercourse and the transmission of goods between Germany and Austria-Hungary.

Harden, who of late has agreed on various points with the Social Democrat "Minority," treats the whole Mitteleuropa Idea with ridicule. After saying that the resolution to allow Russia to have Constantinople must have come hard to the English, he goes on:

"That they accepted and proclaimed it is to be explained by the well-meaning but childish chatter amongst us about an imaginary 'Central Europe' which is to stretch from Emden to Bagdad, and which would compel England to bind Russia to itself by a permanent alliance, and after that the United States.

* *Vorwärts*, December 2, 1915.

If any State or group of States really intends to bring about such a wonder, they would do well to begin the building of it noiselessly, and to let no little word of boasting be heard before the roof is set upon it with shoutings. He who pastes up a placard on every wall to the effect that he is gathering a strength which will compel all who do not belong to his lot to lick the dust, ought not to be surprised if there is fresh leaguing against such an attempt, a leaguing which grasps at every means promising help, without much anxious hesitation. A Germany hostile to Britons, to Russians, to Latins, the military-political-economic Paramount Power and supreme Disposer between the North Sea and the Persian Gulf—rather than that, so think those threatened, will we see the White Tsar enthroned on the Sea of Marmora. In order to pile up every conceivable impediment before the enemy's will-to-power on the land way to this Utopia (from which in the first instance a larger harvest could hardly be expected than the revenue of one lean Prussian industrial province, but whose potentialities for the future frighten those dazzled by German magic), the Ten Nations promise the Balkan States and the fragments of nationalities distributed through the Empire of the Hapsburgs a time of paradise."*

Harden here hints that the Mitteleuropa talk is responsible for the measures of an anti-German Protective kind adumbrated on the side of the Allies. On the other hand, a prominent writer of the "Minority," Eduard Bernstein, warns the Allies that the one and only thing which could make Mitteleuropa a reality would be the proclamation

* *Die Zukunft* for January 20, 1917.

of a boycott of Germany such as was envisaged at Paris in March, 1916. "If that step were ever taken, the necessity of self-defence would compel the Central Powers to conclude a Central European economic federation."*

"The real motive behind the Mitteleuropa movement is, as Rohrbach frankly admits, *not economic, but military and imperialist.* Manufacturing States do indeed strive towards association with agricultural States, but it would be economically monstrous for two manufacturing States, like Germany and Austria, to form a Customs Union."†

The Berlin-Bagdad Idea, so far as it implies Germany's drawing large supplies of raw material or agricultural produce from Turkey, has been blown upon by the scientific geographers. Philippson has examined the economic potentialities of the Turkish Empire and shown that the popular anticipations are largely illusory. Mesopotamia has a rich soil, but to make it productive would require a new system of irrigation which could not come into work under many years. And where are the cultivators to come from? The climate is not suitable for European settlers.

Professor Stuhlmann‡ reckons that the area capable of cultivation extends to only 14,000 square

* *Die Neue Zeit* for February 9, 1917, p. 448.
† "Spectator" in *Die Neue Zeit* for May 19, 1916, p. 196.
‡ *Frankfurter Zeitung* for June 6, 1916, morning edition.

kilometres, and he maintains that the stories of the wonderful economic wealth of Babylonia in antiquity are fables. The detailed calculations of the Göttingen geographer, Hermann Wagner, he says, have shown that out of the 100,000 kilometres which make up the alluvial region of the Euphrates and Tigris, only between 20,000 and 30,000 were cultivated in ancient times. According to Willcocks, the water of the Euphrates and Tigris would not suffice to irrigate more than 30,000 kilometres. Emil Zimmermann, who quotes these figures, goes on:

"William Willcocks had drawn up in 1910 a plan for irrigating 950,000 hectares at a total cost of 400 million marks. The ground reclaimed was to yield 1,000,000 tons of wheat and 100,000 tons of cotton. Taking Willcocks's plan as a basis, one finds that the reclaiming of the whole area cultivated in antiquity (30,000 square kilometres = 3 million hectares) would take twenty-four years and cost 1·2 milliards of marks. For establishing the irrigation-system and for populating the country, the Englishman counted on a stream of settlers from Egypt and India; but Turkey could not admit masses of these immigrants. So that at the end of twenty-five years the amount of land under cultivation would still be far from the maximum of 30,000 square kilometres, and also the men would be lacking for intensive cultivation of these tracts."

Zimmermann then points out that of the kind of produce which Germany might hope to get from Turkey it imported from abroad in 1913 goods to

about the amount of 3,700 million marks, 74 million marks from Turkey:

"If our trade with Turkey (import and export) by 1930 reaches a figure between 500 and 600 million marks, we may well feel satisfied."*

The Colonial Idea is definitely assailed only from the side of the Social Democrat "Minority." Gustav Eckstein, a writer of this school, who has recently died, contributed two articles to *Vorwärts* (February 1 and 2, 1916). The presupposition upon which the whole *economic* argument of the Colonial party is based is that it is a great advantage for a country to obtain all the raw materials it requires from its own soil or from territory which belongs to it politically. This presupposition Eckstein denies:

"It is true, of course, that during the war the provision of the raw materials which have to be brought from overseas encounters great difficulties. But one has to remember that it is not only sources of supply from overseas which in war-time are liable to be cut off, but sources of supply at home which are accessible to the enemy. For instance, France can no longer get coal from the war-zone or from the part of France occupied by the Germans; and in the same way, Russia has lost rich coal-mines and centres of textile industry. It is not the question whether the sources of supply belong in a political sense to the country upon which their

* *Preussische Jahrbücher* for February, 1917, pp. 329, 330.

security in war-time depends, but their degree of accessibility to the enemy. If England were cut off from oversea traffic, it would make no difference that all that it required existed in its own colonies. The idea of making Germany independent of foreign countries is impracticable."

[Social Democratic Colonial politicians (of the "Majority") are apt to urge that the provision of raw material from the country's own possessions would make it independent of the monopolist greed of foreign producers.] "This" (says Eckstein) "is not by any means always true. If Russian shipping, for instance, brought only Russian petroleum instead of American, it would still be depending upon the Standard Petroleum Oil Company, since this forms a trust with the Russian producers. It matters very little to the Russian consumer in the long run whether he is fleeced by a foreigner or a countryman."

Another writer of the "Minority" who contributes articles under the pseudonym "Spectator" to Kautsky's *Neue Zeit* writes in a similar strain:

"Colonies, so far from furthering the economic development of a country, tend to impede it; the colonies themselves suffer from their lack of political independence, and they cannot for that reason develop their trade either with the mother-country or with other countries as they might otherwise do; and, finally, this conclusion stands out more prominently than anything else: The political possession of a colony is no guarantee that it will continue to serve the mother-country either as a market for its industry or as a source whence it can draw raw materials."

Quessel, one of the most ardent Colonial enthusiasts in the Social Democrat "Majority," had adduced statistics to show that the imports from Germany into British colonies in the year 1913 were very much smaller than those from the British Isles. Quessel used this fact to prove that the political connexion made it impossible for Germany to compete. "Spectator," on the other hand, by giving the figures for other years, argues that the German imports into British colonies had been increasing *at a much more rapid rate* than those from Great Britain. The imports from England, for instance, to New Zealand between 1899 and 1913 had risen 140 per cent., whilst those from Germany had been more than quadrupled; the imports from England to India between 1904 and 1913 had risen 70·9 per cent., those from Germany had been more than trebled. The most signal instance is Egypt. In this case the proportion of imports from Great Britain in 1913 had actually fallen as against the years 1909, 1894, and 1884, whilst those from Germany had grown between 1884 and 1913 from £5,000 to £58,000. The proportion of exports from Egypt to Great Britain had also fallen, whilst those to Germany had risen from £27,000 in 1894 to £128,000 in 1913. This in a country under British rule! "What can the Quessels, the Winnigs, the Lenschs, and all the new-baked *Kolonialtheoretiker* say to that?"*

* *Die Neue Zeit* for April 14, 1916.

"There is no reason why we should allow ourselves to be dazzled by the Giant Empires. Müller-Holm has given the right answer: 'They say that Germany must not be left behind. If the others have colonies, Germany must have them too. *That is a reason for children, not for grown men.* Because others strike out a false path, are we bound to follow them?' German manufacturing industry had had a brilliant development. Why? Just because Germany is *not* a Giant Empire and has no assured colonial market. Let the others create Giant Empires, if they will. If Germany devotes itself to a *true* policy of improving conditions at home (*eine wahre Kulturpolitik im Innern*), it will far outstrip the Colonial Empires by its manufacturing industry and its trade."*

Perhaps it is unnecessary to point out that all this criticism of the four ideas does not come from people who are opposed to them all. The Social Democrat "Minority" are, of course, opposed to them all as different forms of "Capitalist" Imperialism, but in many cases it is the people who are keen about one or more of the four ideas who disparage the others. Zimmermann, for instance, whom we cited as depreciating the potentialities of Turkey, does so because he is keen about colonies, and wants to show that Turkey could never supply what Germany needs; Reventlow depreciates Mitteleuropa because he is keen about sea-power; Solf, the Colonial Minister, depreciates sea-power, because he is keen about colonies; Kuno Waltemath, for the

* *Die Neue Zeit* for May 19, 1916, p. 197.

same reason, depreciates Mitteleuropa ("Mitteleuropa, as pictured by Naumann, would be a very awkward construction: it would lack one directing will. On the other hand, if Germany made itself a great African Power," etc.)* And in spite of all the mutual criticism, it seems probable that the four ideas, either all together or in some combination, have still tremendous hold upon the popular mind in Germany to-day—especially *Mitteleuropa plus Berlin-Bagdad*. The Colonial group is very keen and energetic, but it may be questioned whether there is so widespread an enthusiasm for the colonies. In a chapter contributed by Jöhlinger, one of the editors of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, to "Recht, Verwaltung und Politik in Neuen Deutschland" (a composite book edited by A. Bozi and D. H. Heinemann), with the special object of defending a colonial policy, we are told:

"So far as it is possible to form a judgment at this stage, it would appear that during the war the idea of a colonial activity on the part of Germany has not gained many adherents. At home one may now often hear the words, 'What is the good of colonies to Germany when they can so easily be taken away in war?' At the front, too, the question is often agitated. More than once 'field-greys' have written: 'Our home country we are able to defend, but oversea dominions are never anything but points exposed to attack, where the enemy can gain cheaply pledges to hold against the

* *Preussische Jahrbücher* for January, 1916.

conclusion of peace.' Since these ideas are becoming increasingly general, it will be well to examine why Germany should pursue a colonial policy," etc. (p. 370).

If, however, in Germany the passion for colonies shows signs of waning, we have in England a group who are doing their best to keep it alive in the German breast, by continual asseverations that Germany could not but feel a permanent grievance if it did not get back its colonies at the end of the war.

We gather from all the utterances upon which this chapter is based that Germany is still impelled more by the craving for power in the abstract than by any clear idea of what it wants. The war is a great adventure which must surely yield a balance of profit in *some* direction.

The *Kölnische Volkszeitung* (February 16, 1917) had a leading article in which it argued that a grandiose war-aim, an idea of the future making an imaginative appeal to the masses, must be put forward by the Government in order to raise the *moral* of the people to the necessary pitch.

"To-day, after nineteen months of war, the German people is still without a war-aim and without a war-ideal. [By 'war-aim,' the paper explains, it means the aim to be realized by this particular war; by 'war-ideal' it means the national ideal to be realized at a more distant future—say in a century.] It might be objected that the defence of the country was a sufficient

war-aim, but it is difficult for the people to feel the war as a war of defence so long as they are fighting in the enemy's country which they have invaded."

That is to say, it is the case of a concrete aim being wanted to generate and maintain the will to fight, rather than of people fighting to realize a concrete aim.

CHAPTER IV

THE "FRONDE" AGAINST THE CHANCELLOR

WHAT, amid these various strains of sentiment and opinion, is the purpose of the central directing brain of the German Empire? To some extent, as we know, all the organs of public opinion are being darkly played upon by the Power behind. The strands of government go out from an inner region to which our eye cannot pierce; there the capital decisions determining the moves of policy and strategy from day to day issue from the interplay of a small number of human minds and wills. All the public controversy as to the relative worth of the four ideas may possibly, in a country with the political constitution of Germany, count for as little in determining the course of the German State as the chatter of children. Not that the Government, even in Germany, can be indifferent to public opinion, but the public opinion by which the Government is influenced may be something very different from the opinion which makes itself loudly heard in

the press. To some extent the opinions urged in the press have, no doubt, real weight, but to some extent they may be merely demonstrations by people with theories who have no solid body of public opinion behind them; to a considerable extent, again, so far from representing a force which acts upon the Government, they are themselves due to inspiration proceeding *from* the Government. An outside observer, therefore, who estimated the relative power of different strains of opinion in Germany solely from the utterances of press and platform might get things in wholly false proportions.

What is the mind of the Government? Well, it is not certain that even the inner circle is animated by a single mind. Conflicts of which the outside world knows nothing may go on there and produce variations of policy of which we cannot trace the originating causes. So long as Herr von Bethmann Hollweg* is retained in his place by the Emperor, the mind and will of the supreme Government must be for us embodied in the gaunt, long-limbed figure of the Imperial Chancellor.

We have already noticed the stories with regard to a trial of strength, in the critical days before

* On a very minor point: the name is often printed in English papers, in the *Westminster Gazette* habitually, and occasionally in German papers, with a hyphen, Bethmann-Hollweg: the form *without* the hyphen is that used by the Chancellor himself.

Germany's declaration of war, between the war party in the entourage of the Emperor and the party of the Chancellor, and reason was given for thinking the stories substantially true. However that may be, when war was ultimately decided upon, Herr von Bethmann Hollweg gave his assent, and his public utterances since that date seem sufficiently bellicose. Yet it is certain that he, and the Government he directs, are regarded with unconquerable suspicion and ill-will by large circles in Germany. The Pan-Germans, the people whom we described in the last chapter as giving sea-power the supreme place, as demanding large annexations East and West, go on persistently spreading the view that Bethmann Hollweg is not to be trusted, that the Government is capable any day of making some weak and disastrous surrender. Future historians will note it as a curious thing how closely parallel were the campaigns carried on simultaneously by an analogous section of society in England and in Germany against their respective Governments—the campaign carried on in England by such organs of opinion as the *Morning Post* and the *National Review* against Asquith, Grey, and Haldane, against the "Potsdam Gang"; and the campaign carried on in Germany by the *Deutsche Tageszeitung*, *Das grössere Deutschland*, etc., against Bethmann Hollweg and Helfferich. I do not mean to imply that the two campaigns were both equally

justified, or both equally little justified; what the merits and defects of our late Government may have been is a matter not to be decided by any German analogy, but by an examination of the particular facts: I only want to point out that the two campaigns do present curious points of similarity.

One must admit that there is something enigmatic about the figure of the Emperor William II.'s fifth Chancellor. He has been all through the war what we call in England a "dark horse." On the crucial questions about which Pan-Germans and the Liberal-Radical elements in the country carry on continual battles, the Chancellor in his public utterances has always used phrases of such vagueness that both sides could claim that he agreed with them. He is a man marked by a certain self-enclosed gravity, an aloofness from the crowd, or, when he is compelled to break silence in order to combat the assertions of a foreign enemy or of his enemies at home, he has shown frequently a petulant and nervous irritability. Even his supporters admit regretfully that he is deficient in that kind of personal magnetism which draws the heart and the confidence of the broad masses of the people.

"Can we feel confidence" (the historian Meinecke wrote last spring) "that our leading statesman will follow the course marked out by a modern and enlightened statecraft, which is capable of leading us, not

perhaps to ideals, but to what is attainable and tolerable? I answer with full conviction: Yes. We should like him to have many qualities which he does not possess. He certainly is not deficient in inner sympathy with all the sound forces of the nation, but he lacks the push which would enable him to organize these forces in the service of his policy, and so create a counterweight to the self-seeking organizations of the several parties and interests. His temperament keeps him in a dignified, but not always practical, isolation. This isolation, on the other hand, has given him the inner freedom which allows him to look at the great national interests quite apart from personal and subjective considerations, and to revolve them in his heart. It may be that with his grave and serious character thoughts and resolutions mature more slowly, but they do mature to a quiet determination which is capable of assuming the heaviest and most tremendous burdens. Again, it may be that he trusts too much to the great inherent virtues of his policy for him always to employ the pettier means which are so necessary for ruling men."*

A less favourable picture is given by a writer in the *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung* for June 17, 1916, p. 772:

"The Chancellor does not make the main outstanding consideration, how the forces of the whole people are to be gathered together for effective action without. From fear of provoking grave internal conflicts, he does not draw the consequences from the principles he has so often proclaimed. . . . There is something in the line of policy taken by the directors of the Empire—

* *Die Neue Rundschau* for June, 1916, p. 732.

this may be said quite plainly—which over and over again makes the supporters of that policy puzzled and reserved. Who can deny that, as things are to-day, the greater number of those who support the Chancellor do so only because they fear that an unknown successor might prove a change for the worse? The Chancellor shrinks from increasing the opposition and resistance which his policy, a circumspect policy of force, already encounters—at one time because it is circumspect, and at another time because it is a policy of force. This gives his manner of address and his defence of his policy the air of a certain timidity and weakness, though these defects, if one looks closer, do not really belong to him. One certainly perceives an almost exaggerated conscientious prudence. It is only when he has to defend himself against direct attacks that his tone becomes one of determination—and, indeed, of inflexibility. But for the very reason that this tone is connected with a defensive attitude, it acquires in an unfriendly ear a note of excitement and nervousness which his opponents immediately construe as a reaction from irresolution to its opposite. The uncompromising way in which on these occasions he lashes out against his opponents only makes them more bitter enemies. But because he does not set forth with complete openness the positive kernel of his action, he creates joy among the enemies of his enemies, yet fails to make them his friends."

There is, I think, in certain quarters in England a tendency to regard the Chancellor as standing for moderation and moral principle against the German Jingoes. The facts, so far as we can as yet trace them, seem to show that he is indeed a man who

is sensible both of the dangers involved in great adventures and of the moral aspect of things. This kind of sensibility, however, if it is not powerful enough to restrain people from a wrong course of action, is apt simply to make their action hesitating and unhandy. And this apparently is what has happened in the case of the Chancellor. In agreeing to the declaration of war, in agreeing to the violation of Belgium, in agreeing to submarine frightfulness, he accepted in the end the view of the Jingoes. That he would ultimately do so in the matter of annexations, if the war left Germany in a position to annex, is likely. His hesitation and scruples in each case were not enough to prevent him from sinning, but they were enough to prevent him from sinning boldly and effectively. He assented to the declaration of war, but by causing it to be postponed a couple of days he possibly ruined Germany's chance of winning the war. He assented to the violation of Belgium and then publicly declared that it was a wrong—an utterance which the German Jingoes declare they will never forgive him. In this way he gets into that uncomfortable moral tangle which is the common fate of men with a weak will to good overborne by the forces of evil. Hence, one must think, the almost febrile acerbity of many of his public utterances:

"A little grain of conscience made him sour."

Hence their frequent dishonesty, and even reckless falsehood. Men of this type are liable to find in the end that they have lost the confidence of all sides.

The attack upon the Chancellor from the Pan-German side has turned upon three questions—the question of annexations, the question of submarine warfare, and the question of constitutional reform.

The annexation question was the first of the three questions to become prominent. Already in the spring of 1915 Pan-German circles had become uneasy as to the intentions of the Government and considered it necessary to put their views in a secret memorandum before the Chancellor. This was the now celebrated address of the Six Associations, the publication of which in Germany has never yet been permitted, though its contents became rapidly known.* The Six Associations represented the chief Agrarian and manufacturing interests of the country, and this fact would show, if nothing else did, how false the suggestion is, common among pacifists and semi-pacifists in England, that the Pan-German aims represent the view of only a negligible minority in Germany, and that we may trust to the supposed solid bulk of moderate opinion in that country. The demands of the Six Associations were those now familiar as

* An English translation forms an Appendix to Mr. J. W. Headlam's book "The Issue" (Constable).

the demands of the Conservative and National-Liberal "Freedom-of-the-Seas" group: Belgium to be subjected to the German Imperial legislation, both in military and in tariff matters, whilst the industrial undertakings and landed property are transferred to German hands; in France the coastal districts to be retained as far as the Somme, the mining districts of Briey, the fortresses of Longvy, Verdun, and Belfort, and in these French districts, too, "industrial establishments, including both large and moderate-sized properties, to be transferred to German hands"; from Russia, to counterbalance the extension of *industrial* Germany on the West, large districts to be taken as an extension of *agricultural* Germany, "at least parts of the Baltic provinces and of those territories which lie to the south of them"; also in none of these conquered lands are the inhabitants to have any voice in the direction of the German State. It is premised, as an undoubted thing, that Germany must have a Colonial Empire adequate to "the many-sided industrial interests of Germany," "security in matters of customs and commerce," and a sufficient war indemnity. But there is not a word about Mitteleuropa, not a word about Berlin-to-Bagdad.

The memorandum (though no doubt its composition had occupied a considerable time previously) is dated May 20, 1915. On May 28 the Chancellor made a speech in the Reichstag. He said that the

Germans must go on fighting till they had gained "all possible real guarantees and securities." An enthusiastic journalist might write that "Bethmann Hollweg in these mighty days has come to surpass himself; there breathes through his utterances the breath of eternity," but his utterances had not unfortunately the advantage of showing what he meant. Did he by "real guarantees and securities" mean the annexation of Belgium and Northern France? The Conservatives claimed that he did: the Social Democrats denied it. They took the occasion of this debate to protest against the idea of annexations; it was absurd, they said, to tell them that they ought to be silent about war-aims in the House, when outside the House all sorts of foolish things were being said. Germany was already buzzing with the memorandum of the Six Associations and similar utterances. Scheidemann, one Social Democrat speaker, said he did not believe that the Chancellor was rightly construed as endorsing the Conservative view: he believed the Chancellor still abode by the statement made in the Emperor's Speech from the Throne at the beginning of the war: "We are waging no war of conquest." The Chancellor might presumably have settled the question as to his meaning in a moment by explaining his oracular phrase himself. But he preferred to survey the battle of words, wrapped in inscrutable silence. The German Government did

not want as yet to commit itself to either view before the world.

The controversy for and against annexations, begun in the Reichstag, was carried on in the press, though more or less muzzled by the standing prohibition to discuss war-aims. The Conservative Freiherr von Zedlitz, in his organ *Die Post*, maintained that when the Chancellor said "guarantees" he meant annexations, and for such a policy he promised him the support of the "great economic associations," and of all the parties in the Empire, except the Socialists, and even for the Socialists von Zedlitz prophesied an obligatory conversion "when the men came back from the front." Then, on June 6, King Ludwig of Bavaria pronounced in a speech a definite geographical name. He said that at last Germany was going to have a direct outlet *from the Rhine* to the sea. That could only mean a German domination over Belgium. Outside Bavaria the papers were not allowed to give the King's phrase in their reports of his speech. They substituted for it a vague expression about "more favourable means of communication between Southern and Western Germany and the sea." But naturally the original phrase, given in the Bavarian papers, became known. The annexationists were jubilant. "For the first time," exclaimed the Conservative *Kreuz-Zeitung* (June 8), "the silence as to German war-aims has been broken in an authori-

tative quarter!" A National-Liberal leader, Dr. Stresemann, said in a speech at Frankfurt: "For what the King of Bavaria has uttered we must be grateful to him. It cannot but be that a sigh of relief will go through the German people."* The Radical papers tried to deprive the words of significance. "It seems very doubtful whether King Ludwig spoke on an understanding with responsible quarters in the Empire."†

A month later Friedrich Naumann wrote in his paper:

"Whilst the open discussion of war-aims is forbidden, a dangerous manufacture of war programmes flourishes in secret, which, for the most part, does not remain concealed from the outside world. Large economic Associations put forth their views as if the world lay already at Germany's feet."‡

An allusion, of course, to the now notorious memorandum. In August Theodor Wolff, the able Jewish editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, deplored the effect which the memorandum was having abroad.

"At this very moment the declaration of the Six Associations and the manifesto of certain professors are being published in all foreign papers in full, and it is impossible to exaggerate the harm done to the German cause by these Napoleonic demonstrations."§

* *Frankfurter Zeitung*, June 9, 1915, evening edition.
† *Frankfurter Zeitung*, June 11, 1915.
‡ *Die Hilfe* for July 8, 1915.
Berliner Tageblatt, August 16, 1915.

"The manifesto of certain professors" referred to by Wolff was presented to the Chancellor on July 8 ("Zur Lage"). It was generally on the same lines as the manifesto of the Six Associations, and demanded large annexations. Professor Delbrück, as standing for the more moderate section of German opinion, started an opposition memorandum and published the names of those who signed it in his organ, the *Preussische Jahrbücher* (October, 1915). He laid stress, as Wolff had done, on the great harm wrought by the Professors' Manifesto abroad, and he obviously hoped that his own manifesto might act as a corrective, convincing foreigners that the Jingo manifesto did not represent the best opinion in Germany Unfortunately, as one of those who signed the Professors' Manifesto, the theologian Rudolph Seeberg, of Bonn, was able to point out triumphantly in the *Tägliche Rundschau*, whilst Delbrück had secured for his "Moderate" manifesto only 141 names (including professed pacifists like Schücking), the promoters of the Jingo manifesto had already got 1,347 names,* when the

* We are given the following analysis of the signatures:

University Professors and Oberlehrer	352
Schoolmasters and Ministers of Religion ..	158
Higher Civil Officials (Burgomasters and Heads of Principalities)	145
Judges and Barristers	148
Members of the Reichstag and the Landtags ..	40
Retired Admirals and Generals	18
Business Men	182
Country Landowners	52
Artists, Writers, and Booksellers	252
Total ..	1,347

Government put its foot down and forbade further canvassing !

And now the controversy was beginning to involve, not merely an argument as to what the Chancellor meant, but a campaign to discredit the Chancellor, to show that he was not only ambiguous in speech, but really untrustworthy in policy. The campaign was, of course, largely carried on underground, and it is impossible to trace its ramifications from what has appeared in public print. Three of the Imperialist National-Liberal leaders—Stresemann, Bassermann, and Fuhrmann—were pointed to in some papers as engaged in an intrigue to bring about Bethmann Hollweg's fall. In an article, however, which he wrote for the *Tägliche Rundschau*,* Fuhrmann implied that he considered the Chancellor's term "real guarantees" satisfactory, and he deprecated putting the question of confidence "in a particular statesman" in the foreground, as tending to confuse the issues.

On the same day (August 10) certain prominent members of the party tried ostensibly to check the campaign and publicly expressed their confidence in the Chancellor. In spite of this, five days later, the Central Directorate of the National-Liberal party passed a resolution affirming the necessity of annexations both on the East and on the West, and saying that the party would stand solid behind

* Quoted in the *Kreuz-Zeitung* of August 10, 1915.

any Government which pursued these ends with inflexible firmness. This resolution, by significantly omitting to mention the Chancellor, made the party's support of the Government conditional.

The following month we find that rumours were going about in Conservative circles that the Chancellor had been for some time entertaining the thought of a premature and precipitate peace with England, and a resolution of the Inner Committee of the Conservative party gave expression to their distrust.* They gave the Government to understand that the overthrow of England was the immutable object of the German people to be achieved by every means in its power. The Radical press, on the other hand, protested that no good could come of imperfectly informed persons nagging the Government.†

During the following five months there was no public manifestation of the agitation of the Conservatives and National-Liberals against the Chancellor. But it was current gossip that a great deal was going on in the background over which the censorship and the party truce had drawn a veil. People had come to designate the subterranean campaign as the *fronde*.‡

On December 9, 1915, the Chancellor made another speech in the Reichstag in which he threw

* *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, September 30, first edition.
† *Frankfurter Zeitung* October 3, second edition.
‡ *Kölnische Zeitung*, February 15, 1916, midday edition.

out some more phrases of doubtful interpretation as to the intentions of the Government with regard to districts occupied in the West. He said: "We hold in our hand very valuable gages (*Faustpfänder*)." He said that the Imperial Government would not yet state what "guarantees" it might ultimately consider necessary. Only there must be no "gates for invasion (*Einfallstore*)" open to the enemy either in the West or the East; it was well known that at present the English and French regarded Belgium as a "territory-adapted-to-the-purposes - of - hostile - approach (*Aufmarschgebiet*) against Germany."

Two speakers for the Social Democrat party, Scheidemann and Landsberg, emphasized once more the stand taken by their party against any proposal for the annexation of territories with a non-German population. Landsberg took hold of the word used by the Chancellor of the occupied territories—gage (*Faustpfand*). "Gages," said Landsberg, "are things which are given back." Speakers representing the other parties spoke in favour of annexations. Still the Chancellor made no public statement to show which view was that of the German Government.

It was in February, 1916, that the *fronde* broke out in an open storm. It was at the time when Germany was sending a Note to America on submarine warfare. The Chancellor accorded an inter-

view to Mr. Karl von Wiegand, the correspondent of the *New York World*, on the subject. He implied that the submarine war was about to be prosecuted with increased vigour. It apparently added to the bitter feeling in Conservative circles that, if the Chancellor wished to make a public statement of the Government's policy, he should choose as his medium an American journalist instead of one of the German representative assemblies. The Budget Committee of the Lower House of the Prussian Diet, on February 9, passed a resolution affirming that it would be prejudicial to the national interest if the submarine war were restricted out of regard to America. This was in appearance an expression of adhesion to what the Chancellor had said to Mr. Karl von Wiegand. It was really intended as a demonstration that the Prussian House of Representatives was entitled to express its views on the conduct of the war. The Government organ, the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, at once riposted with an official declaration that the Prussian House of Representatives had no say in the matter. Then the whole German press burst into flame. The Radical papers, and notably the *Berliner Tageblatt* and the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, ranged themselves strongly with the Chancellor; the Conservative press found itself in the curious position of defending the right of representative assemblies to an effective voice in the policy of the country.

On February 14 the Chancellor had a private conversation with the leaders of the different parties in the Prussian Diet, and two days later the President of the Lower House announced that there would be *no debate* on foreign policy, although, as a matter of principle, he reaffirmed that the House had full right to discuss foreign affairs. The Chancellor had been strong enough to prevent a debate in which the Jingoes would have predominated. But the agitation went on, and on March 15 the Lower House of the Diet solemnly reaffirmed by a vote of the House its right to express opinions on foreign affairs.

Before the date of this resolution an event had occurred which modified the situation. The parties of the *fronde* had fixed their hopes upon Admiral von Tirpitz. He was the strong man who must be put in the place of the weak-handed Bethmann. In a number of *Deutsche Stimmen* published in the early part of March the National-Liberal leader, Bassermann, had written openly: "Our Tirpitz assures us the victory if we use the means." A few days later Tirpitz had to resign his office as Chief of the Imperial Admiralty—on the ground of ill-health. Bethmann's hand was, at any rate, strong enough to remove from power a personality who might lend strength to the faction against the Government.

And now the controversy seemed about to be transferred from the Diet of the Prussian Kingdom

to the chief assembly of the Empire, the Reichstag. On the same day on which the Prussian Diet passed the resolution just referred to, March 15, the Reichstag reopened. The Conservatives and National-Liberals made it known that they proposed to move three resolutions, calling for unrestricted submarine war, on March 22. When the day came,

"even before 10 o'clock in the morning there were crowds besieging the door of the Reichstag in the hope of obtaining some of the few tickets of admission still left over. For hours they waited in the cold, damp weather at that particularly windy corner. Most of them had brought their breakfasts with them. Just before the sitting opened, members of the Reichstag, representatives of the Government, and visitors streamed from all quarters on foot and in cars. Will the Imperial Chancellor come? Will there be any discussion of the submarine question? Will there be any explanation even, or will it all come to nothing in the end? Such whispers ran through the crowds in the House. Who knows? The members themselves do not know—since they are still holding conference on the question—whether a public discussion of the submarine motions is to take place to-day. 'U-boat war,' 'Tirpitz'—one can hear the words buzzing in everybody's mouth, low or loud, according to individual temperament. About a quarter past one it is announced that the sitting is deferred for another half-hour. That means that an understanding has not been reached, that every effort has been made to postpone, provisionally at any rate, a public discussion. Shortly before the sitting opens those in a position to know have already learnt that a discussion of the submarine question will *not* take place.

Before entering upon the order of the day, the President, Dr. Kämpf, announces that, according to an agreement come to by the representatives of the various groups, the submarine question is till further notice eliminated from the first reading.

"The declaration was received without any critical comment; only the disappointment depicted in the faces of those who listened in the visitors' galleries was a mute criticism."*

What had happened behind the scenes was that at the critical moment the Socialists in the Reichstag had rallied to the Chancellor's support. If the Conservatives and National-Liberals moved their resolutions, the Socialists announced that they would move a motion too. The parties opposed to the Chancellor thought it better, in view of this complication, to let the three resolutions drop. But they sought to save their face by declaring loudly that the question was only adjourned, that it would still be laid before the House another time.

The Chancellor had won another bout. But it had become plain that he leant more and more for support upon the parties which demanded internal reform. This attitude on the part of the Government greatly intensified the enmity which the Conservatives felt for the Chancellor on the ground of his conduct of the war. What is called the *Neuorientierung* was seen to be an essential factor in the *fronde*. *Neuorientierung* (New Direction) is to-day

* *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung*, March 23, 1916.

a word in everyone's mouth in Germany. It has reference to the promise of the German Government, that it will adopt a more friendly attitude to proposals for constitutional reform after the war. This was first announced by the then Secretary of State for the Interior, Dr. Clemens Delbrück, in November, 1914, but the promise was soon confirmed by a declaration of the Chancellor himself in the Reichstag.* The demand for an abolition of the existing anti-democratic franchise system has been persistently, but unavailingly, urged from the Liberal side in Prussia. This system is the stronghold of reaction in the country, and the indication that the Government might make concessions to the Liberal demand was enough to throw the Conservatives into a wild state of anger and alarm. The Chancellor was weak then, not only against the foreign enmity, but against the foe at home!

No public debate in the Reichstag on the submarine controversy came off, but on March 30, in the secret Budget Committee, all parties agreed to pass a colourless resolution, which affirmed the necessity of using all military weapons which might secure a favourable peace "while respecting the just interests of neutral States." The newspaper bickering between the press of the *fronde* and the

* See the article "Zur Neuorientierung der Inneren Politik" by Scheidemann in Thimme and Legien's "Die Arbeiterschaft im neuen Deutschland."

Radical press went on. On April 3, in the *Vossische Zeitung*, Georg Bernhard appealed to the Chancellor to speak out. There was no doubt, he said, that an open statement of Germany's aims would have a quieting effect. The Chancellor's silence, for instance, on the U-boat question poisoned the atmosphere, and led to endless rumours.

"Now, at the meeting of the Budget Committee, the Chancellor has spoken, and his friends say the atmosphere is cleared up. But was it necessary to let matters reach such a point of tension? The Chancellor's reticence led people to think he had no definite point of view as to the problems which were agitating the country. It was only against this indefiniteness that the opposition in the country grew so strong. It was not that people opposed the Chancellor's aims—nobody knew them. The anxiety was due to the fear that he had no aims. The Chancellor ought to realize now that it is not silence but speech which arouses enthusiasm in politics."

Not only did an open newspaper war go on, but a great campaign of pamphlets secretly distributed, more venomous in character than anything which could appear in the public press, went on. The iron strength of Bismarck was invoked to exhibit the miserable weakness of the man who now sat in his seat. Bethmann Hollweg was branded as a traitor to his country. In his speech of June 5 in the Reichstag, the Chancellor turned upon his traducers. He lashed out with extreme bitterness. Two pamphlets especially he mentioned which had

been circulated in hundreds of copies, one by a writer who assumed the pseudonym of "Junius Alter," and another by a highly-placed Prussian official, Director-General Kapp.

This speech added fresh fuel to the newspaper controversy—the Radical press, of course, justifying the Chancellor's indignation, the Conservative press trying to make out that Director-General Kapp had been misconstrued. Some of the National-Liberal papers sided with the Chancellor, some represented his outburst as unworthy; it was significant that the Roman Catholic Centre was, on the whole, on his side. On the other hand, the "Minority" Socialist wing intimated that it had little faith in the Government's profession of concession to internal reform. The *Neuorientierung* remained a promise without the corroboration of anything done, and even in his war-aims the Chancellor was really nearer to the Pan-Germans than to the Socialists.*

The next outstanding incident was an announcement made by the "Majority" Social Democrat, Philip Scheidemann, in a speech at Breslau in June.† Scheidemann had taken a prominent position in protesting against annexations in the West; annexations in the East, at the expense of Russia, he is (or was) apparently ready to agree to. Scheidemann now said:

* *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, June 10, 1916.
† *Berliner Tageblatt*, June 21, 1916.

"When a year ago the Six Associations submitted to the Chancellor their well-known annexationist plans, I and certain party friends waited upon the Chancellor to protest against these plans. We heard from the lips of the Imperial Chancellor that he had nothing in common with these plans for annexation, that he emphatically repudiated them, and that he most decidedly disapproved of them, as of all such plans. This was more than a year ago. Since then the Chancellor has said or done nothing that would justify us in assuming that he has changed his mind."

It was obvious that even if Scheidemann accurately repeated the Chancellor's phrases at this interview, they were as slippery as ever. Bethmann Hollweg had said he disapproved of "*these* plans," "of all *such* plans," but he had not said that he repudiated the idea of annexation. A "Minority" Social Democrat, Ledebour, present on the occasion of Scheidemann's speech, rose afterwards to point this out. Scheidemann's announcement, he said, was no revelation. Everyone knew that the Chancellor did not share the views of the Six Associations. But the difference was one only of degree. Scheidemann's announcement was published abroad in the papers throughout Germany; no notice was generally taken of Ledebour's speech.

A week or two later the so-called "Moderate" circle, which supported the Chancellor against both Pan-Germans on the one side and the Social Democrat "Minority" on the other, formed a "German

National Committee for the Preparation of an Honourable Peace." If the Government did not actually suggest this move, it at any rate smiled upon it. The Association was to carry on a campaign of enlightenment in the country by popular lectures showing what Germany's true war-aims ought to be. Speakers on behalf of the Committee were frankly annexationist, but they were opposed to the large schemes of annexation *in the West.* The president of the Committee was Fürst von Wedel, and its members included a number of magnates of the business world, bank directors, and industrialists; writers such as Delbrück, Harnack, Rohrbach, Oncken, Naumann; "Majority" Socialists, such as Südekum and Fendrich—the groups which, as against the Reventlow school, laid stress upon Mitteleuropa, the connexion with the East or an African Empire. It included even such rampant chauvinists as Georg Bernhard of the *Vossische Zeitung*, who agreed with the general policy of the Committee in opposing permanent annexations on the West on the principle, as he put it, "Your money *or* your land." The positions occupied on the West ought to be used by Germany as gages for exacting large concessions of other kinds from the enemy. The Committee at once became an object of attack for the Pan-Germans. The historian Professor Dietrich Schäfer, who stands in close association with the Pan-German League, announced

that an "Independent Committee for a German Peace" had already under his presidentship been waiting for a year for freedom to act, and this Committee for a *German* Peace now openly took the field against the Committee for an *Honourable* Peace. Reventlow fulminated against Harnack in the *Deutsche Tageszeitung*.

An article in the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* (July 3), taken to be inspired by the Government, was believed to mark an attempt to conciliate the Right. If, however, the Chancellor desired to reassure the Conservatives as to his intentions, his task was not an easy one. The mind of his opponents is shown in an article by a member of the Upper House (*Herrenhaus*) published in the *Pommersche Tagespost* on July 2:

"Hardly 20 per cent. of the German nation have unconditional confidence in the political leadership of the statesman responsible, and this because of his apparently benevolent policy with regard to our chief enemies, America and England. By means of the censorship an attempt is being made to direct public feeling especially against Russia, and to represent Russia as the chief enemy of Germany's future. Indeed, the Imperial Chancellor has so far laid down as his own positive war-aim the liberation of the Polish population—that is to say, of his beloved Jews—from Russian domination."

A few days later one gathers from the press that the Conservatives and their National-Liberal allies

were setting their hopes upon Prince von Bülow as the strong man who was to oust Bethmann Hollweg and save Germany.

On July 17 the Chancellor met the party leaders in private conference. It is presumed that he tried to explain to them his war-aims and why he still refused to sanction unrestricted submarine warfare. His explanations, whatever they may have been, had little effect upon his enemies. Their ingenuity, according to the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (August 18), hit upon the device of circulating broadcast a pamphlet which advocated mild methods of warfare against England and attributing it to a member of the Government! On the other hand, the campaign opened by the German National Committee to support the Chancellor seems to have come to very little. On August 12 it was announced that the great Iron King, August Thyssen, who joined it at the outset, had resigned his membership, together with three other prominent industrial magnates, because certain remarks made publicly by Harnack had offended them. After that the Committee seems to have dropped out of public notice. I think I saw stated the other day in an English paper that it had made a spasmodic pronouncement to the effect that a handsome indemnity must be paid to Germany as part of the conditions of peace, but I am unable now to trace the reference and am not sure whether there may not have been a con-

fusion with Professor Schäfer's "Independent Committee," which is still active. Whether the "National Committee" still has any corporate existence at all is difficult to discover.

The chauvinists of Bavaria seem to have turned once more to the King of Bavaria as someone who might help them to get their desires (in this case, unrestricted submarine warfare) against Bethmann. A deputation waited upon the King on August 5, but was civilly ushered out with an admonition from the royal lips to trust the constituted authorities.

At the end of August the Chancellor made a move calculated to strengthen his position with the mass of the people. He caused Falkenhayn to be replaced as Chief of the General Staff by the popular hero Hindenburg. Falkenhayn was another of the "strong men" of the Pan-Germans, and had at one time been run by that party against Bethmann Hollweg: Hindenburg professed detachment from all politics and was ready to serve the Government. The fact that Falkenhayn's credit had been somewhat damaged by the failure at Verdun, no doubt, made it easier to discharge him, as Tirpitz had been discharged a few months before.

The Conservative press, thinking presumably that it was impossible to disparage Hindenburg, now took the line of representing him as soundly hostile to England where the Chancellor was weak, and thus playing Hindenburg off against Bethmann.

Indeed, a strenuous attempt was made to get the name of anyone who had popular prestige in Germany to back the agitation. Eminent men of science were persuaded to sign complaining documents. It was alleged that Count Zeppelin had written some months before to the Chancellor to protest that "an effective and ruthless use of Zeppelins" was not being made, out of a desire to spare England. (Count Zeppelin after this published a declaration of confidence in the Government.) What Bethmann's real war-aims were nobody even yet knew. Scheidemann kept stumping the country saying that the Chancellor was against "all plans of conquest": National-Liberal press organs, on the other hand, maintained that the Chancellor's speeches implied that Germany must keep "military, political, and economic power" over Belgium (the regular formula of the annexationists).* Bethmann himself still refused to terminate the controversy by a single clear word.

On September 28 the Chancellor made another speech in the Reichstag. He held out no hope that the Government was going to change its policy on the submarine question, but he repudiated with great vigour of language the suggestion that the Government was moved by the desire to spare England. Indeed, he seemed to wish to clear him-

* See a quotation from the "Nationalliberale Korrespondenz" in *Vorwärts*, August 31, 1916.

self from the charge of weakness in action by the violence of his language in scolding England, "the most egoistic, the fiercest, the most obstinate enemy." It was noted by the *Berliner Tageblatt* that all through Bethmann's speech the Conservatives "sat with folded arms, leaning back, motionless, cold and inimical." The chauvinist press welcomed the vituperation of England, but took care to intimate that deeds, rather than words, were what was wanted. On the other hand, the Radical press was disappointed that Bethmann had still said nothing definite about the New Orientation, and it reminded him of the case of Hardenburg, the Chancellor of 100 years ago, who had yielded to the reactionaries.* The Social Democrat press was disappointed that he had not even now said a clear word against annexation, since his earlier pronouncements, "ambiguous, and claimed by Pan-German papers as an approximation to their views," were not done away by mere silence.†

On October 11 Scheidemann spoke in the Reichstag, and in the course of his speech pronounced those words which have since become current in the Social Democrat "Majority," as the motto of those opposed to a change of the pre-war map in the West. "We say that what is French shall remain French; what is Belgian shall remain Belgian;

* *Berliner Tageblatt*, October 2, 1916.
† *Vorwärts*, September 29, 1916.

what is German, German." He significantly did not add, "What is Russian shall remain Russian."

On October 15 Professor Schäfer's "Committee for a German Peace" held a meeting in the Reichstag buildings. Count Reventlow, who spoke at it, attacked not only the Chancellor but the Minister for the Interior, Helfferich, as a friend of England; in fact, he was more dangerous than the Chancellor. Then a bombshell fell into the gathering. At the afternoon session, a member of the Committee brought a message from Hindenburg himself, asking that the agitation against the Government might stop. The Committee for a moment was staggered. But Count Reventlow rose to the occasion and pointed out that the Chancellor had added to his other sins that of deliberately misleading Hindenburg. He urged that the Committee should enlighten Hindenburg as to the true facts and continue its campaign. That was all the more needed since it was regrettably true that the majority of the Germans still held by Bethmann Hollweg.

As to the Kaiser, by whose favour, after all, Bethmann Hollweg remained the Chancellor of the German Empire, the line taken by the Conservatives was to represent him as surrounded by a "Chinese wall" of watchmen who did not allow him to know the real sentiments of the people. This conception is ridiculed in the semi-official *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* of June 5:

"We may rest assured that the Monarch is perfectly well informed about all the currents of opinion in the country. The idea that the Kaiser would allow himself to be surrounded by watchmen who inform him according to their sweet will is, in view of the Kaiser's alertness, sense of duty, and self-confidence, an absurdity. As we know Wilhelm II., he would most decidedly forbid any watchmen near him."*

In October a group of the Chancellor's enemies, headed by Prince zu Salm-Horstmar, thought it might be possible to break through the "Chinese wall" by presenting an address to the Kaiser in person. The request to be allowed to do so drew upon them a stern rebuff. His Majesty signified his "high displeasure that at so critical a time he was obliged to face this sort of unsubstantiated attack on the management of affairs by His Majesty's Government."

In a document drawn up about this time by a body of Saxon chauvinists (mainly of the landowning gentry) it was declared that the feeling of the nation towards the Monarchy "had never had so severe a test imposed upon it as to-day."†

On November 9 the Chancellor spoke in the Reichstag in reply to a speech of Viscount Grey's. The question of a League to Enforce Peace was in the air, and Viscount Grey had spoken of it with

* *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, June 5, 1916.

† *Frankfurter Zeitung*, October 18; *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten*, October 8.

sympathy. Bethmann Hollweg was concerned to show before the world that Germany was no less pacific in disposition. Germany, he said, was ready at all times to join the union of peoples, and even to place herself at the head of such a union as would restrain the disturber of peace. But the first condition presupposed by such a league was that the plans of the Entente for bringing about a new arrangement of the world were abandoned and that no "aggressive coalition" should be thenceforth formed.

The German Government was working up to its public proffer of a peace on the basis of the existing war-map and German victory, and peace talk became rife in Germany. Scheidemann had come into greater prominence as a figure on the political stage. His assertion that he acted as the Chancellor's mouthpiece in giving that explanation of the Chancellor's meaning which the Chancellor was unwilling to give himself, made his person the centre of controversy. Scheidemann had said that the Chancellor was against annexations in the West, and the Chancellor had not contradicted him. Scheidemann claimed that this silence meant consent.

Those circles who desired annexations and yet wished to hold by the Chancellor denied this. It was freely alleged that in the Reichstag Committee Bethmann Hollweg had himself expressly

said that his silence was *not* to be taken as implying consent.* But as to whether he did, or did not, agree with Scheidemann, he still left it dark. The annexationist press continued to call upon him in vain to repudiate Scheidemann in a manner which would leave no doubt. Eduard Bernstein, of the Socialist "Minority," as independent and judicious a writer as can be found to-day in Germany, taxed Scheidemann and his group with dishonesty. There was nothing, Bernstein said, to show that Bethmann Hollweg did not mean to annex, if circumstances allowed. The sense which Scheidemann wished to force upon his utterances was not the one they naturally bore.†

In December the German Government invited the Powers at war to a discussion of the conditions of peace without any specification of its own terms. The enemies of the Chancellor would have liked to make the situation a subject of debate in the Reichstag, at which they could express their disapproval of the move. By a combination, however, of the Centre, the Progressives, and the Social Democrats on the side of the Government, the proposal was quashed, and the indignation of the Pan-Germans forbidden this vent. All that the Conservative group in the Reichstag could do was to raise shouts of disapproval when the Chancellor read the peace

* *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, November 15, 1916.
† *Leipziger Volkszeitung*, November 25, 1916.

proposal on December 12; one member in uniform, standing a few paces from the Chancellor, shook his fist at him and shouted "Scandalous!" On the other hand, the action of the Government seems to have been warmly endorsed by the bulk of opinion in the country. So little sense had ordinary Germans of the realities of the situation that there was genuine widespread surprise and disappointment when the German Government's offer was refused by the enemy. The suspicions of the Pan-Germans that the Chancellor might really be forming an alliance with the Socialists were aggravated, and Scheidemann became more and more a target for attack.

On the last day of January an event occurred which profoundly changed the situation. The Chancellor made a speech to the Main Committee of the Reichstag, in which he told them that the Government was at last about to do the thing for which the Pan-Germans had been clamouring so long—institute an unrestricted submarine warfare and take the chances of American hostility. The proceedings of the Committees of the Reichstag are private; but the text of the Chancellor's speech was communicated to the press. From this it appears that Bethmann Hollweg was at pains to show that on the moral question there was no difference between himself and the Jingoes. He had no objection on principle, he insisted, to submarine

frightfulness. It was purely a matter of expediency. Last year it would have been inexpedient to try it. The circumstances had changed and now it was expedient. That was all. So far as this matter went the disagreement between Government and Jingoes was at end, not by the Jingoes coming into line with the Government, but by the Government coming into line with the Jingoes.

The Pan-German press, of course, was jubilant, but the hostility to the Chancellor has not been mitigated. Of the three questions on which that hostility is founded—(1) unrestricted submarine warfare, (2) annexations in the West, (3) the *Neu-orientierung*—the first only has been eliminated.

As to the second point, the Chancellor has still refused to make any utterance which would commit him either to the annexationist view or the view of Scheidemann. In his speech of February 27, 1917, he defined the German aim in the phrase " to terminate the war by a lasting peace which grants us *reparation* for all wrongs suffered and guarantees the future existence of a strong Germany." The Jingoes seized upon the term " reparation " as implying the promise to exact a substantial indemnity: the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, a paper in particularly close touch with the Government, said that it did not necessarily mean a *money* indemnity. On all sides there is weariness at the eternal equivocation. The *Kölnische Volkszeitung* (February 28)

complains that Scheidemann is still able to identify the Chancellor's view with his own. The *Berliner Tageblatt*, on the other hand, expresses regret that the Chancellor did not enumerate plainly some of the things which Germany does *not* want.

The natural inference from all this is that the German Government is waiting upon events. It is prepared to get out of the war as much as ever it can. But its fuller knowledge of the military and international situation causes it to realize, as the Jingoes do not, how restricted the possibilities may be. If circumstances turned out such as to allow it to annex or to exact indemnities, there is little doubt that it would come into line with the Jingoes in this matter as it did in that of submarine warfare. If, on the other hand, it becomes obvious that annexations and indemnities are impossible, it will make it appear that it had all along agreed with Scheidemann. And till decisive events take place in the military field, it continues to safeguard its future liberty of action by a Delphic ambiguity. It is not by negotiations on the basis of the present war-map, but by the pressure of military events, that the German Government will be induced to set its seal to such a peace as may secure the tranquillity of the world in the days to come.

On the question of constitutional reform the Chancellor seemed in his speech of February 27 to pledge himself more emphatically than he had

hitherto done to the *Neuorientierung*. Already, it may be, the possibility of a revolution in Russia was coming in sight, which would make it dangerous for the German Government to shilly-shally further in the introduction of a larger measure of democracy into Germany. Even so, however, it is to be noted that the Chancellor's words failed to inspire the German Liberal papers with a feeling of security. They might, said the *Frankfurter Zeitung* (March 2, third edition), have produced a good effect if they had been uttered at the beginning of the war. They contained no definite programme, and meantime the Entail Bill in the Prussian Landtag and the new taxes framed so as not to touch property were not particularly hopeful indications of a real *Neuorientierung*.

"We can see no reason" (said the *Berliner Tageblatt*, February 27, evening) "for deep satisfaction, so long as these doubtless fine-sounding words are not accompanied by corresponding deeds."

"What" (wrote Georg Bernhard in the *Vossische Zeitung* of March 12) "does the Reichstag know about the aims of the Government? What policy is to be pursued in the future? What is the political significance of the last four Chancellor-speeches? The deputies do not know. And what about internal policy? . . . The confidence which the Left shows in Bethmann Hollweg really rests on what? Fundamentally on their confidence that Hindenburg will win the war, and that then all else will be added. And this 'all' one calls—in face of all this—the political development of the German people!"

"It is time" (said the "Majority" Social Democrat paper of Karlsruhe, the *Volksfreund*, March 1) "for the Chancellor to lift the veil and express himself somewhat more clearly as to the measures he means to take in order to introduce the German to a better future. We should not like to have to abandon the hope that Herr von Bethmann Hollweg will meet this thoroughly justified demand before it is too late. Circumstances cry aloud for action."

On the question of internal reform, too, it is likely that the German Government is waiting upon events and will act only under their pressure.

[It is possible that by the time this book appears, the situation will have been modified by some more distinct declaration on the part of the German Government. At the moment these pages are corrected in proof, the situation is still as was described above in March; the German Government has not yet made any clear pronouncement on the annexation question, and has offered nothing but vague promises for "after the war" in the matter of constitutional reform. A curious development is that the parties which demand reform are now in favour of postponement, whilst amongst the reactionaries there is an idea that illusory reforms carried through immediat ly might serve to block real reform later on.—*May* 14, 1917.]

CHAPTER V

CONCERNING LIES

DR. BANG* remarks that a matter which has played an extremely important part in Germany since the outbreak of the war has been the "English campaign of lies." "They simply tremble with rage when they speak of it."

"There is" (the Danish theologian continues) "something very mysterious about this war of lies. The English, at the beginning of the war, cut the German Atlantic cable. No one can wonder at that; it is surely part of what may be called the natural course of war. The belligerent Powers, of course, do everything possible to isolate each other; but the Germans say the English did this in order to fill the world with lies, and prevent the Germans from disseminating the truth. In the first place, it must be remarked that European countries conterminous with Germany could not in any case be debarred from German truth. Nor have we in Denmark observed any sign of this English campaign of lies. The Germans, on the other hand, at once took the lead with a propaganda so aggressive and so full of hatred for Germany's opponents, that it entirely overshot its mark,

* "Hurrah and Hallelujah," p. 242.

arousing antipathy instead of the coveted sympathy—a fact which the Germans themselves have subsequently admitted and deplored."

"I altogether contest" (he adds) "the existence of this 'campaign of lies.'"

In all wars, I suppose, accusations of lying have been one of the commonest flung to and fro between the two sides. "Another German Lie" is a heading in English newspapers which has ceased to startle by its familiar look. Some Germans take pride in what they call their "objectivity." Well, here is a chance for them to exercise it. Here they find themselves in a conflict, the air thick with inevitable accusations of lying Can they emancipate themselves temporarily from mass-suggestion and ask with a cool brain what the truth about these charges is?

In the first place, what do we mean, either English or German, by a *lie?* Do we include false statements made by error, in good faith? Of course, even in peace-time the European press is not infallible. Or do we restrict the term *lie* to a false statement made with the consciousness of its falsehood? If so, we must allow the charge is frequently brought on both sides with considerable licence. But there are also a large class of false statements which we regard as reprehensible, not because the persons making them knew them to be false, but because they ought to have known. If a

person propagates a statement which is actually false without taking the trouble, required by the case, to ascertain whether it was true or not, we may use of his false statement a term implying blame. If we like to apply the word *lie* to such false statements, it may be permissible to do so, only there is a clear distinction between a false statement made unconsciously, with however great a degree of carelessness, and a false statement made with a knowledge of its falseness, and to use the same word of both does not tend to clearness of thought. And, further, the phrase we have just used, "without taking the trouble required by the case," indicates a great field of uncertainty in apportioning blame. For it may be impossible in many cases to say with any precision what amount of trouble was the due amount to take before making the statement. It is ordinarily thought, for instance, in private life that a statement redounding to our neighbour's credit may be published with less thorough verification than a statement which takes away his character. Or again, in many cases we may have to make a statement within a certain time which very much limits our opportunities for verification. If, therefore, we apply the term *lie* to false statements made through a culpable omission to ascertain the truth, our use of the word must have a very wavering and doubtful extension.

When we turn to utterances of the belligerent

press during the war, with these distinctions in our minds, we may note at the outset that in the press of all countries a large number of statements have been made which are untrue; many of them have been shown to be untrue by the event. False statements in the English press have been communicated by cable to neutral countries in the ordinary course of journalistic business, and false statements in the German press have also been sent abroad by Wolff or Transocean or some other channel. How many of these false statements can properly be described as "lies"? I believe if anyone ever takes the trouble to go through the files of old newspapers and compiles a list of those statements which can be proved to have been made with a consciousness of their being false, the number—on the English side, at any rate—will be a very small one.

The majority, probably, of statements which the other side has stigmatized as "lies" have been a reproduction of rumours from some quarter of the vast theatre of war. Supposing, for instance, it is announced in the Italian *Stampa* that a well-known man of business, belonging to a neutral country, who has just come to Italy from Germany, has declared in an interview that a great food riot took place in Berlin, just before he left that city, that the military charged the mob, and that the pavements were piled high with corpses. (I seem to remember something of this kind last year, but give it here

simply as an imaginary instance of the kind of thing that often occurs.) The next day the London papers will have a small paragraph reproducing the statement of the Italian paper. They will almost certainly name the source: "Rome: such and such a date. The *Stampa* publishes an interview with a well-known man of business, who alleged," etc. The head-lines of the papers in the London streets will bear in large letters, "Great Food Riot in Berlin." The careless English newspaper-reader says to his wife or chance acquaintance: "I see that revolution has broken out in Berlin." A more careful reader is likely to answer him: "Well, it's only a report, so far, come by way of Rome." Meantime the report is being flashed from London all over America. Very likely it was untrue: its germ may have been some quite small street *fracas* between a queue of women and some policemen, in which no single individual was killed. Presently the German reader in Berlin is told by his *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* that the English press is announcing that a massacre has taken place in Berlin, and that the pavements were piled high with dead. He is beside himself with indignation. "The lying English! Filling the world with lies! And Germany's cable to America cut!"

One sees the whole process of the thing, repeated in one form or another, almost every day. But where in such a case as we have imagined does the

"lie" come in? What the British papers said was true. They said that the *Stampa* had published an interview, etc. Well, so it had. The *Stampa* had said that the well-known man of business had alleged, etc. Well, so he had, or perhaps the reporter may have given his words with some inexactitude. What the well-known man of business alleged may have been untrue, but he may have been reporting in good faith what someone had told him in his Berlin hotel, adding unconsciously a few embellishments, or he may have been the kind of person who liked to concoct a sensational story in order to make an impression. How are we in such a process to lay our finger on the place where the element of conscious mendacity came in? Perhaps it never came in at all.

The same thing happens in the reverse direction. I remember reading in a German paper in 1915 statements attributed to someone who had just come from London, and narrating a wholly mythical story of damage which had been done by Zeppelins on the occasion of one of their visits to this country. Amongst other things the narrator stated that Victoria Station was in ruins. If I remember right, he professed to have seen it himself. At the moment when I read the account in the German paper I had only to lift my eyes to see out of my window Victoria Station standing there in the distance, massive, commonplace, and unscathed. Probably

the false story in the German papers was passed on to papers in Sweden, and Switzerland, and Spain.

Of course, on neither side do the papers circulate with impartiality all the rumours which reach them. They give a preference, naturally, to those which may seem to further the cause of their own side. Can anyone seriously maintain that when a report comes to hand, which may be true, and which, if true, is sure to interest the public, a paper is wrong to publish it? One may even say that since a paper exists to give information as promptly as possible to its *clientèle*, it would not be fulfilling its proper function if it omitted to give them notice of the existence of an interesting rumour. If it turns out to be true, the papers which have failed to announce it will give the impression of being behind-hand with their news. If it turns out untrue, no one but a fool would accuse the paper announcing the report, as a report, of having "lied." Even in peace-time, as we know well enough, a sensational report is something which a newspaper will eagerly lay hold of in order to outstrip its rivals in the market. The more reputable papers exercise some criticism in giving currency to such reports, and refuse to do so if the evidence for them is very bad. If there is a fair chance of their turning out true, a reputable paper will probably publish the report, but will, of course, indicate in so doing that it is a report still unverified and name its source. The

less reputable papers are no doubt much less exacting in the evidence they require before circulating a report, but even they, as a rule, name the source. This in peace-time; and then think of war conditions! The public mind is in a state of intense excitement and expectation, greedy of every half-word of news from beyond the frontier, rumours flying from mouth to mouth and growing as they fly. This, at any rate, was the state of things in the first months of the war, when we felt ourselves in a new world with our old bearings gone, and hardly knew what was possible or impossible. And if in such a state of things English papers reproduce reports which turn out untrue, reports to the disadvantage of the national enemy, is the world seriously asked to believe that this can only be accounted for by an organized fabrication of lies on the part of the British Government?

In Germany, just as much as in England, the first weeks of the war were prolific of false reports.

"We all" (writes Professor Meinecke) "had in those first days to go through an overthrow of our mental equilibrium. What was noblest and best in human nature, indeed, was evoked by the call of the hour, and, together with what was good, all kinds of sorry stuff as well. Above all else, the capacity for critical judgment and the sense of truth seemed to give way under the frightful strain of the situation. The impulse to

generate myths and legends attained fearful proportions in the over-excited popular mind, and in a moment every little cloud turned into a camel."*

I have before me two little volumes in which Herr Reinhold Anton gives a catalogue of "lies" of Germany's enemies during the first five months of the war.† The books are pretty wretched productions, hasty and uncritical, but they may serve usefully for the moment to give an idea how many of what a man of average German intelligence calls "lies" are simply reports reproduced in the ordinary way of business. Out of fifty-four lies put down to the British I should classify thirty-six under this category. The author even registers a premature report of the death of the Emperor Francis Joseph on September 10, 1914, as a *Reutersche Lügenmeldung*—as if the report of the death of an old man of eighty could not be accounted for, except by the hypothesis of a news agency's deliberate mendacity! Lest, however, we should suppose that this perfectly natural occurrence of false reports in war-time was to be found on one side only, the author, by what we must take to be an oversight, lets slip into his list of *Reuterschen Lügenmeldungen* what is a beautifully typical example from the other side. The Austrian paper, *Die Zeit*,

* "Die deutsche Erhebung von 1914" (J. S. Cotta, 1915), p. 64.

† "Der Lügenfeldzug unserer Feinde," "Am Pranger" (O. G. Zehrfeld, Leipzig, 1915.)

published that "ladies returned from England" reported that in English churches, after the usual prayers, the following prayer was offered—and an absurd concoction was given which the ladies can never have heard in any reputable Anglican or Nonconformist place of worship. This is a *Lügenmeldung*, as the German author uses the term; I should deprecate calling it a *lie*, for the reasons explained.

Of the thirty-six instances of reports reproduced —as the author puts it, mendaciously—in England during the period covered by his two books, a good many were proved by the event to be untrue. In the case of a good many others, they would still be judged by most Englishmen to have been true. For the author includes reports of abominations committed by the German army in Belgium. Since, however, in the case of German atrocities, we have now, no mere series of statements in newspapers, but indictments formally drawn up and promulgated by the authority of the British, the French, and the Belgian Governments, it will be better to take the question of atrocities by itself later on. We are here considering simply false statements in the press.

After the category of "reports," the heading which has the largest number of entries is that of "claims to victory." I have noted seven of such "lies" in Herr Anton's two books. It has occurred over and over again in this war that the same

operation is claimed on both sides as a success. Conflicting statements as to the results of some battle are often due to merely verbal differences in description. A name, for instance, like Mort Homme, is given to a complex of elevations, and the extent of ground it covers may not altogether correspond on the maps of the two sides. Or both sides may claim to hold the summit of some hill, when the hill is, as a matter of fact, a long ridge, part of which is held by one side and part by the other. The most common ground of contradiction is, however, that such words as "victory" or "defeat" are ambiguous. It happens continually that when one side or other makes an effort, it accomplishes part of what it wanted to do, but only part. Perhaps it is rare for an operation to achieve the whole of what was thought of as the possible maximum. Such an operation, when its results are compared with the state of things which preceded it, may be called a victory; when it is compared with what was intended, a defeat. This fact makes it possible —as any attentive reader of official bulletins will have observed—for every conceivable action to be represented either as a victory for your own side, or at any rate as a defeat for the enemy. You thrust back the enemy such and such a distance at such and such a point, and claim a success; the enemy has only to attribute to you a design to push him back much farther or at a larger number of

points, and he can represent you as having failed. When the enemy pushes you back, you say the same thing of him. The result is that it is only possible to say whether an action is really a victory or a defeat when it is looked at in connexion with the whole series of operations of which it forms a part, and it is the final result of the series which will give in retrospect their ultimate character to the individual operations composing it. Is, for instance, the German invasion of France a success or a failure? Only the final result of the war can visibly demonstrate the answer. So far the Germans have succeeded in part of their plan, in getting those regions of France which they hold, and have failed in their efforts to get farther. Supposing the war were to end in the surrender of the Allies —an issue which I do not suggest as probable— the pressure which Germany by its continued occupation of those districts had exercised would have been one of the causes bringing about a favourable conclusion, and all the French and British operations along the Western front throughout the years of war would appear in the light of unsuccessful attempts to expel the invader. If, on the other hand—as it seems reasonable to expect—the war ends in a victory for the Allies, every local success in France from the beginning of the war by which the Germans were pushed back a mile or two will appear as successive steps in a victorious process.

Even the early battles in Belgium, in which the Belgians delayed, but failed to arrest, the onrush of the German hosts, will appear as German defeats, since, but for the time thus gained for the Allies, the German onrush might indeed have secured a final victory for Germany before the French and British could consolidate their resistance. If, therefore, the Allied press in the first two or three months of the war spoke of various operations in the Western field as defeats for the enemy, it is still too soon for Germans like Herr Anton to claim that the description has been proved false—to speak of such statements as "lies" is simply foolish.

The remaining ten "lies" in Herr Anton's fifty-four attributed to the English are also statements which either would still be regarded on our side as true, or which could not be shown to be consciously mendacious. (Five are official pronouncements in public speeches of statesmen or through the press; five are statements made in British papers by the editors or by contributors.) It would be interesting to know whether a sober German could point to any statement issued on the authority of the British Government or to any official bulletin as having made an assertion contrary to what was known to be the truth. Of course, no such statement pretends to give all the truth. All Governments practise a rigid economy in the amount of truth they enunciate —and rightly so. But a statement directly contrary

to the known truth it is, I believe, impossible to adduce on the part of the British Government during the war. The case frequently alleged is that of a British man-of-war reported to have been sunk in the earlier part of the war, the loss of which the Government refused to acknowledge. The Government did not, however, deny it. The Germans seem to have an imperfect apprehension of the difference between refusing to acknowledge a true fact and definitely denying it. Only the latter can be called lying. The Government did later on deny the loss of the *Tiger* asserted by the Germans. We know in England that the assertion of the Germans, originating probably in an honest error of observation, was in this case false. But for the Germans, apparently (one may take Captain Persius in the *Berliner Tageblatt* of June 16, 1916), the two cases are indistinguishable. Because in the first case the evidence before them seemed sufficient to establish the fact, and in the second case the British Government had issued a definite denial, they apparently jumped to the conclusion that it was the practice of the British Navy to lie about naval losses. From this they naturally inferred that it was the proper thing to do. And because the young German Navy is very anxious to do the proper thing, the Germans seem to have followed liberally, after the naval encounter of June, 1916, what they erroneously believed to be the practice of the older naval Power.

It is impossible not to regard some of the false statements made officially on the German side as statements which those who made them knew to be untrue. The denial of naval losses, already referred to, is an instance in point. The assertion made by the German administrative and military authorities in the German declaration of war on France that French aviators had thrown bombs on the railway near Karlsruhe and Nuremberg is another instance, for the statement has subsequently been admitted on the German side to have been false (*Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift*, May 18, 1916, p. 611), and one does not see how such a statement could have been made in error by the responsible authorities. Or, again, there is the circumstantial account of damage done by Zeppelins in Manchester and Liverpool, which was issued with official authority. In Liverpool, the German official statement (February 24, 1916) said:

"A large number of bridges between the docks were so severely damaged that for the present they cannot be used; several ships in the Mersey were severely damaged, amongst them a cruiser, anchored below Birkenhead, and a transport steamer belonging to the Leyland Line; a stable with 200 horses was destroyed by fire, and the horses with their Canadian stablemen are said to have perished; the Booth Line and the Yeoward Line suffered severely, as their docks were partly destroyed; neighbouring dry docks and engine works were destroyed, the Birkenhead dry dock, engine and

boiler works completely; in all over 200 houses were destroyed by bombs and fires; at Bootle, at the mouth of the Mersey, a powder factory was completely destroyed."

And the Zeppelins had never, as a matter of fact, come within thirty miles of Liverpool or Manchester! The Germans obviously cannot have intended the world to suppose that their statement was based upon reports of any Zeppelin commander, since it described damage which could only have been observed at close quarters and not at night from the air. Nor does it seem likely that the German Government had been honestly deceived by the reports of its secret agents, for what object could any agent have in concocting a false story in such a case for the Government employing him? One is driven in such a case to the hypothesis of calculated mendacity, though it is difficult to understand how anyone could imagine that such mendacity paid. For a falsehood about things so easily accessible to thousands of people must inevitably be discovered and show the German Government to the whole neutral world in the character of a liar —as, indeed, happened in this case, when the Swedish correspondent of the *Stockholms Dagblad* went to Liverpool to find out the truth on the spot. Perhaps it was another case where the principle of *Not kennt kein Gebot* was considered to hold good

—the "necessity" this time being the need to keep up the spirits of the German people.

It is, however, neither the notice in the British press of premature reports as to the death of the Emperor Francis Joseph, nor claims to victory, nor official bulletins, that the Germans are mainly thinking of when they rage about England's filling the world with lies. It is mainly the charges which have been brought against the German State and the German Army. Germany certainly stands accused before the world of atrocious actions, violating the fundamental principles on which the life of civilized nations has been built. The crimes charged against Germany come under three heads: (1) The breach of the State's pledged word in the invasion of Belgium; (2) atrocious and dishonourable methods of warfare; and (3) bad treatment of prisoners. It is these three heads of indictment which have blackened the fame of Germany throughout the world.

As to the treatment of prisoners, I shall say nothing, except that such cases as Wittenberg, whilst they may prove a certain number of German officials to be unspeakably vile, do not appear typical of the treatment of prisoners as a whole in Germany. I believe it to be true that Germans have in a number of cases behaved to prisoners with a barbarity and a cruelty which I do not think that even the worst men (or worst women) on our side

would have shown, yet the treatment of prisoners on the whole in Germany has not been shown to depart from the rules internationally agreed upon. It is natural under war conditions that one hears more about the abuses than about what is normal, and if, in applying the recognized rules, we have shown in our treatment of German prisoners a more generous and kindly spirit, I am not amongst those who regret that England should in this respect have gone beyond its opponents.

As to the invasion of Belgium, we know well enough now the lines of the German apologia. The invasion is defended on three grounds: (1) No treaty is intended to hold good for ever; a change of circumstances may invalidate any treaty concluded in view of a former state of affairs: (2) Where the vital interests of a State are affected, it cannot be held by any treaty: *Not kennt kein Gebot;* no treaty could oblige a State to commit suicide: (3) Belgium had forfeited its neutrality by concluding military conventions with Great Britain in 1905. It is these three arguments which give robust assurance to the consciences of numberless people in Germany, who, if we had to deal with them in the private concerns of life, we should find to be virtuous and humane—and even regardful of Christian moral precepts.

With regard to the first two arguments, that no treaty is binding under all conceivable change of circumstances, and that the national existence of a

people may be threatened by dangers so great that the nation is justified in disregarding its treaty obligations, there is one thing which may be said. Abstractly, I think the propositions are true. It seems to me that we put ourselves in the wrong if we try to prove the wickedness of the Germans by denying these propositions. If we say, "Under no conceivable circumstances can a treaty become a 'scrap of paper,'" we undertake to maintain a thesis, not only very doubtful in ethical theory, but one which British statesmen would certainly, in certain circumstances, repudiate in practice. As to *Not kennt kein Gebot*, in the case of the individual the ancient moralists held that the plea of self-preservation did not suffice to justify all sorts of actions:

> "Non omnia, quædam
> pro vita facienda putant."

Nor do I think that anyone would care to maintain to-day that there were no sorts of national action which a nation ought to refuse to take, even if the extinction of the nation followed upon refusal. Yet certainly the obligation of self-sacrifice is much more restricted in the case of the nation than in that of the individual when acting for himself. That is to say, it is not strictly true, even in the case of a nation, that necessity (the necessity of self-preservation) knows *no* law, but it is true that necessity knows much fewer laws than in the case

of the isolated individual (though even in private life the case where the individual acts *as a trustee* is analogous to that of the State). We should all probably agree that if the choice before a nation were either to disregard some obligation constituted solely by a written treaty with another Power or to forfeit its national existence, the nation would be justified in disregarding the treaty.

We can see, I think, that if these propositions are abstractly true, it is explicable, as a matter of psychology, that virtuous Germans have been brought to believe that they justify the German invasion of Belgium. But do they ? In this connexion, one may reflect that there is no concrete moral precept which is absolute. "Thou shalt not lie" admits of generally recognized exceptions, indicated by Plato—lying to an enemy in war, lying to a madman. "Thou shalt not kill," again, is not taken to mean that under no conceivable circumstances is it right for one man to take another's life. And so with all other concrete moral rules. The fact, however, that the obligation of veracity is not absolute does not prevent there being such things as liars, nor the fact that the prohibition to kill is not absolute prevent there being murderers. If a man is a liar, we do not regard it as a justification if he says, "Oh, but you know the rule about speaking the truth is not absolute." The thing, in fact, which has brought casuistry into such evil

repute is that, as practised, it seemed always excusing bad actions by supposing theoretical exceptions to moral rules. And a State whose action would be regarded by sound moral judgment as a villainous breach of its treaty obligations does not really rehabilitate itself by saying, "The obligation to keep treaties is not absolute," or "All obligations give place to the necessity of self-defence."

The line, of course, between the exceptional cases where it is permissible to depart from the general moral rule, and the great majority of cases where it is not, can be drawn only by the moral judgment; it is not a possible matter of demonstration: each man will draw the line according to his individual judgment, and the judgments of each individual will be confirmed or contradicted by the judgment of the world. It is only a question of putting the facts of the case in a clear light, and the verdict must be left to a sound moral sense. And while the damning facts of the German attack on Belgium stand out before the world's apprehension, the German casuistical excuses can only add to their crime the offence of dishonesty. The plea of self-defence urged to justify an aggressive war, the long-laid design, proved by the railways, of a violation of Belgian soil, the promise to respect Belgian neutrality renewed by Germany's Foreign Minister only a year before, the false allegations that the French intended to march through Belgium, dis-

proved by the diplomatic correspondence, the absurd, petty charges, trumped up at the outset and then allowed to drop into silence, as to a violation of Belgian territory by French officers—it is not an argument as to ethical theory which will weigh the German down in the judgment of history, but the story told with straightforward plainness.

But there are the documents the Germans found in Brussels ! Well, what precisely were these documents ? They came under two categories. One set were notes of conversations between the Belgian military authorities and certain British officers in 1905 and 1912 as to the mode of co-operation between the Belgian and British armies, if Belgium ever found itself under the necessity of opposing by force of arms a violation of its neutrality on the part of Germany. The other set were reports sent to the Belgian Foreign Office by diplomatic representatives of Belgium in foreign countries. Both these sets of documents seemed capable of being used to support the German case. The first set, indeed, could serve their purpose only if it could be made out that the conversations (which were distinctly stated in the documents themselves to be purely hypothetical, to refer only to measures which the two armies might take, in the event of Germany's invading Belgium) were definite engagements, " conventions " between the two States. If there was reason to fear that Germany might some

day violate the neutrality of Belgium, Belgium could hardly be regarded as forfeiting its neutrality if it allowed the military authorities of another of the guaranteeing Powers to make informally to it suggestions as to concerted measures which might be taken in such a contingency. And it is a little difficult now for the Germans to represent to a world, which has at any rate some sense of humour left, that the idea of Germany's ever violating Belgian neutrality was a monstrous and impossible one. It was necessary for the Germans to make out that these conversations were definite pacts. Unfortunately, they were rather clumsy in going to work. In the German translation published by the German Government they put, possibly by an error in hasty reading, a word meaning "agreement," "convention" (*Abkommen*), where the French original had "conversation." This was at once pointed out, and made a bad impression. Driven from this plea, the Germans clung to the cover of the documents, across which "Conventions Anglo-Belges" is scrawled in a large hand. The writing on the cover or wrapper of the documents is no part of the documents, and if the documents themselves prove, as they do, that the conversations in question were not conventions, the writing on the cover is worthless as evidence. It is worse than worthless; it has increased the suspicion of German trickery, for the *g* of "Belges" looks un-

commonly like a German one. But, even if the words were not written by the Germans themselves, any subordinate might have written them hastily without knowing the precise value of the documents. Anyway, upon that precious scrawl, destitute of any sort of authority, the German justification for violating, contrary to their word, the neutrality of the Belgian people has come to depend.

This, at least, is how matters would stand, apart from the other set of documents. Let us now consider how these affected the case. They promised to be useful to the Germans in another way. For the opinions expressed by the Belgian diplomatic agents, especially by Baron Greindl, the Belgian Minister at Berlin, a pronounced pro-German, were frequently unfavourable to England. They concurred in the German theory that British diplomacy had been working before the war to " encircle " Germany, out of commercial jealousy. Of course, the documents were no sort of proof of the truth of the theory. They showed at most that certain Belgian diplomatists believed it, that is all. There is nothing to surprise or confound us in that; the theory, as Mr. Bertrand Russell pointed out in the passage we quoted (p. 63), was believed by many people outside Germany, and was none the less certainly untrue. But an opinion which may be taken for just an opinion, when it is expressed in open talk, may be much more impressive when it

is suddenly flourished in the face of the world out of a confidential document, and so the opinions transmitted by the Belgian diplomats to their Government seemed to the Germans a valuable corroboration of their case. They still seem so, although one of the diplomats in question, Baron Beyens, has since published a book, in which he shows that later events have considerably changed his views —as they might have done even those of Baron Greindl, had he lived to see the latter half of 1914.

Each set of documents could be used as evidence for something that the Germans wanted to establish. The first set could be used to make it appear that Belgium had forfeited its neutrality by secret agreements with England; the second set could be used in order to discredit England by the testimony of Belgian statesmen. Unhappily, the testimony of the Belgian statesmen also incidentally disproved the construction which the Germans wanted to put upon the first set of documents. The second set of documents showed the men in the confidence of the Belgian Government as far as they could be from looking upon England as an ally: their attitude, indeed, to England is almost unfriendly. They know about the conversations with General Barnardiston and General Bridges, and their allusions to them prove conclusively that the conversations did not involve any engagement.

Baron Greindl in April, 1906, refers to "la singu-

lière démarche faite par le Colonel Barnardiston " (No. 17). From the Baron's pro-German, or at any rate anti-British, standpoint, it may have seemed a " strange step " on the part of the British military authorities to open conversations as to measures to be taken in the event of a German aggression, but the phrase shows unquestionably that the Baron regarded it as a movement from the British side which could not be expected to meet with sympathy from the Belgian. Again, in December, 1911, he talks of Colonel Barnardiston's " propositions singulières," this time in connexion with a report that the British Government is preparing to land 150,000 men in Belgium, if war breaks out between France and Germany (No. 85).

(This report was substantiated some months later in a conversation between the British military attaché at Brussels, Colonel Bridges, and the Belgian General Jungbluth, of which a minute is included in the other set of documents published by the Germans. According to this minute, drawn up apparently in the Belgian Foreign Office, Colonel Bridges had said that the British intended to land an army of 160,000 men, even if the Belgians did not ask for their help. It seems uncertain how far, if he really said this, Colonel Bridges expressed the mind of the British Government, but if he did, it would imply nothing parallel to the German violation of Belgian neutrality, as the German comments

disingenuously try to make out. Colonel Bridges did not say "even if the Germans do not attack Belgium." Supposing the Germans attacked Belgium, or marched through Belgium, the British Government would be acting perfectly legitimately in landing troops in Belgium, even if the Belgians did not appeal for help. In any case, so far from agreeing with Colonel Bridges, General Jungbluth, according to the minute, definitely dissented. Even these reports of conversations, if looked at closely, absolutely destroy the German contention that Belgium had contracted any engagement with England.) In April, 1914, Baron Beyens, who had then succeeded Baron Greindl at Berlin, refers to the intentions (as it was believed) of the British Government two years before, but speaks of the landing of a British expeditionary force in Belgium, not as something to which the Belgians had agreed, but as something which would have been unwelcome. "En serait-il encore de même aujourd'hui et aurions nous toujours à redouter l'entrée en Belgique de soldats anglais pour nous aider à defendre notre neutralité, en commençant par la compromettre ?" Baron Beyens raises the question whether the British are likely to do what the Germans did three months later. "Une réponse négative n'est pas douteuse."

Moreover, the testimony of these Belgian statesmen refuting the *first* German contention (that as

to the supposed "conventions") is of much greater weight than their testimony confirming the *second* German contention (that as to the drift of British policy). For, where they spoke of the dealings of the Belgian Government, they spoke with inside knowledge, whilst their opinions as to the mind of the British and German Governments were, after all, only those of outside observers.

What were the Germans to do with those two sets of documents, each of which could be used to establish something they wanted the world to believe, but which, if used in this way, were mutually contradictory? Another people might have hesitated as to which they should publish, which was the lesser advantage to be sacrificed to gain the greater. The Germans apparently did not have any such searchings of heart. Imperturbably they published *both!* Writing about this some months ago, I referred to it, as an instance of German hebetude. A friend, however, whose knowledge of official Germany is more intimate than that of any but a very few Englishmen, has pulled me up for doing so. There is, he says, no dullness of intelligence here on the part of the German Government. It is not that they are unconscious of the inconsistency. It is that they can trust the greater part of the world to be dull enough not to see it. This may be so. In any case one gathers that a good number of the non-official Germans who

write about these two sets of documents are honestly unconscious of their own inconsistency, in which case the ascription of *Schwerfälligkeit* would still hold good with regard to a part of the German people, even if it could not be imputed to the German Government.

When we come to the charge brought against the Germans of having committed a series of frightful atrocities in their warfare by land and sea, we come to those accusations which, more than any others, the German is thinking of when he talks of the enemies' "lies." The charge is also what bulks largest in the mind of men in the Allied and the neutral countries who have come since August, 1914, to attach to the name "German" a wholly new connotation of abhorrence and disgust. The topic has given rise to so vast a flood of writing and speech in all the countries of the world, that there may be many readers by this time disposed to turn away from it with a weariness to which even the horrible has become too familiar. Yet crimes have their character and their consequences which cannot be washed away by any volume of talk, however immense; and, staled as the old phrases may become by repetition, the question stands there still: Are these things true, or are they not? And, if they are true——?

No discussion of the present or future relation of the people of Germany to any other people can be

otherwise than futile and evasive, if it does not meet squarely and consider these horrible charges; until this subject is disposed of, it remains like a huge mountain of mutual reprobation between Germany and nearly all the rest of the world. No way of treating it is sillier than to pretend that it can be waved aside by a motion of the hand, that it does not matter, that a little time will suffice to turn it into air. Even if they resolved to say nothing about it, it would still be there, black and dreadful, in the minds of Englishmen when they met Germans so long as any men now living are on the earth. It is sometimes said that we hate the Germans, but to describe the feeling which the ordinary Englishman now has for Germans as "hatred" is surely a psychological infelicity. It would be more nearly described in German by *Ekel* than by *Hass*. A man shrinks from a being whose whole moral constitution is diverse from his own, in whom he finds a want of correspondence with himself in those elementary moral sensibilities and judgments which seem to constitute the deepest and most essential part of his own nature. When Rudyard Kipling some time ago spoke of human beings and Germans as different species, it might have seemed a mere mode of popular abuse. As a matter of fact, it expressed with psychological truth a feeling which exists in Englishmen to-day. Mr. Wells some years ago imagined the invasion of our planet by a race of

Martians, and he describes the peculiar sort of disgust and shrinking which their presence caused in mankind, for the very reason that there was something about them so uncannily alien. When the Englishman to-day thinks of meeting Germans again, he knows that they will be to all appearance men like himself, that he might converse with them on many topics and find a community of ideas, but he feels that behind all that, in the ground of their nature, there is a disconcerting difference. These men, he feels, talking the ordinary language of humanity, are capable not only of doing things abhorrent to all finer human feeling—he knows how liable he is to act against his better self, he knows of what sins his own nation has been guilty—but of doing them reflectively and deliberately, without any sense of violating sanctities, nay, with stolid pride or bombastic self-praise. There are certain inhibitions, certain reverences, which, according to the properly human scale of values, come above everything else; to be wanting in a sense for these is indeed to be inhuman in essential constitution. And these men would violate them, he believes, in a moment, without the smallest compunction, if the established authorities in their country signified their will to that effect. *Deutschland über Alles.* It is because any possible social amenities would have this dreadful *arrière-pensée* that he cannot think of taking the hand of a German without an inner recoil.

The line taken by those Germans whom before the war we considered men of high ideals and humanity, in the presence of these charges, is, it would seem, to meet them with a flat indignant denial. They are simply lies—and there is an end of it. Many Germans evidently realize that a large number of people in enemy countries who repeat them, really believe them to be true, but that is only because, if we are not malignant, we are idiotically credulous, and we accept without reflection every foolish rumour to the discredit of our enemies or every lie put about from the Government lie-factory.

"In order to be quite fair, we will give our opponents credit for one thing. A large part of those rumours set in circulation against us may have arisen in just as good faith, through lack of criticism and nervous excitement, as the innumerable myths and legends which *we* saw run riot in the first weeks of the war, each of us in his own immediate environment."*

Now, there one sees the disadvantage under which both sides, no doubt, labour in judging of each other's mental processes at a distance. For whatever may be true or not true about the German atrocities, this picture of intelligent circles in England accepting without reflection everything they are told is, as we know by direct observation, altogether false. The Germans seem to think that we

* Meinecke, "Die deutsche Erhebung von 1914" (J. S. Cotta), pp. 64, 66.

have failed to realize that assertion is not equivalent to proof; but it is they, perhaps, who fail to realize that denial is not equivalent to disproof. Neither assertion nor denial, however vehement, can clear up the matter, but only a dispassionate examination of the evidence.

Now, we in England are quite aware that among the current stories of German atrocities a certain proportion are untrue. The Germans sometimes point to the story told by Nurse Hume, early in the war, of a mutilation inflicted upon a woman, as an instance where an English attempt to circulate a lie was exposed. But the case, as a matter of fact, was creditable to British honesty. For, whilst a good many papers printed the story, no doubt in good faith, a certain number of papers—*The Times* amongst them—abstained from doing so, the evidence for it appearing to them defective. The story was then officially examined, and proved to be the invention of an hysterical woman. The exposure was the work of the British themselves. I remember again that about the same time the *Globe* (not a paper likely to be suspected of a pro-German inclination !) investigated a story to the effect that there were lying in our hospitals men whose hands had been cut off by the Germans, and traced it to some luridly-minded child in a country village, who had put it about for the fun of making people's flesh creep.

It seems to sober and reasonable men in England that, when all allowance has been made for false atrocity stories, due to mendacity, misunderstanding, or exaggeration, there remains a great bulk of solid evidence convicting the German army of having committed these crimes systematically. One body of evidence is contained in the official publications of the French, the British, and the Belgian Governments. The British contribution to this body of evidence is the Bryce Report and the reports of Professor Morgan. That amount of evidence has, so far, been set in the light of day; there it is for all the world to see. No denial of the atrocities is worth anything which does not presuppose a careful and detailed examination of this evidence.

A fair-minded investigator will, of course, also consider what the German Government has published with the object of invalidating the Belgian charges —the German White Book on "The Alleged Offences against International Law" (a publication which has now been answered in detail by the Belgian Government). The Germans make a great point of the fact that the Bryce Report did not publish the names of the witnesses, which they say renders the evidence worthless. The Committee over which Lord Bryce presided found that in many cases the families which had suffered from German brutality were unwilling—and quite naturally so—that the

world should know of their humiliation. While, therefore, the name of each witness is recorded, the record is not open to the eyes of everyone. The evidence is not thereby invalidated; but one's confidence in the evidence becomes, it is true, more one's confidence in the personal integrity and capacity of the members of the Committee who examined the witnesses and set down what was established to their satisfaction. For this reason the Bryce Report must necessarily have greater weight for Englishmen than it has for Germans. For the members of the Committee are for Germans only names, connected at most with some meritorious publications in the field of letters or historical research, whereas to Englishmen they are men who are familiar personalities in our public life, with some of whom we are, it may be, ourselves acquainted. To a certain extent this would also apply to America, where Lord Bryce is much more than a mere name.

But if some German, honestly convinced that the atrocity stories are all lies, wonders, as he sits among his bookshelves, filled with works of theology or scholarship, in Heidelberg or Jena or Berlin, how it is that reasonable people in England can believe these things, he must try to realize the effect produced upon England by the thousands of Belgian refugees who fled from before the Germans in the earlier months of the war. We in England have not

been dependent upon printed matter only for our knowledge of what took place in Belgium during the latter part of 1914. There have been all these people here going in and out amongst us, perhaps living with us for weeks or months, sitting at our tables, who can say of frightful things: "This I saw," "This happened to me." "Ah, yes," say the Germans, "but how can you depend upon the accounts of people whose nerves and powers of accurate perception were all disordered by the terror of the flight, whose memories in retrospect show their experience through a distorting medium?" It is true that such distortions have to be allowed for, but it is idle to suppose that they can reduce to nothingness hundreds of first-hand stories brought to English homes. They do not explain nuns got with child.

Instead of talking unintelligently about an English "campaign of lies," reasonable Germans might ask themselves what ground people had for opposing an obdurate disbelief to the accounts which came to them. Is the Dane, Dr. J. P. Bang, right when he says that to Germans it is a self-evident axiom that the German people as such cannot do wrong? "That is why, for example, German men of science can stand forth and unhesitatingly, without any argument, demand that it shall be acknowledged that the German Army and the German military authorities cannot commit any crimes—it is simply

inconceivable."* If this is the ground on which Germans stop all these accusations on the threshold, it is not a ground which they can reasonably expect foreigners to hold in the same way. From what we knew of the Germans before the war, there was no inherent impossibility in these stories. We knew, of course, that the German people included many good men. It would take a great deal to make us believe that Dr. Adolf Harnack had been seen to run a little child through with a bayonet, or that Herr Friedrich Naumann had given an order that all the men in a village were to be kept under arrest for a night and the doors of the houses left open so that the soldiery might make free with their wives and daughters, or that Dr. Hans Delbrück had fired the library of Louvain. But we knew also that the German Army was not composed entirely of men like Harnack and Naumann and Delbrück, and that they were no more present on the spot than we

* "Hurrah and Hallelujah," p. 10. That this description of the mental attitude of Germans is not unfair may be shown by its being stated in all innocence in a book by the German Professor of the History of German Culture at Harvard: "American observers have frequently expressed surprise that the intellectual and spiritual leaders of the Germany of to-day—scientists like Haeckel and Ostwald, philosophers like Eucken and Wundt, etc. . . . are all of one mind in this crisis. . . . The reason, I think, is that these men, and with them the mass of the German people, feel that the German cause in this war *needs* no logical defence, that it is impossible to think that the most orderly, industrious, law-abiding, sober, and spiritually minded of nations should, etc." (Kuno Francke, "The German Spirit." New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1916).

were, when the German army swept through the Belgian towns and countryside in the summer of 1914. How did it affect the conduct of the German troops in Belgium, what lofty ideals of conduct Harnack and Naumann and Delbrück might be cherishing among their books far away in Germany? We knew that there were men of high and honourable character in Germany, and many German homes with the fragrance of old-world kindliness and piety, but we knew also that there was another Germany. Berlin for many years before the war had got the reputation of a Sodom amongst the cities of Europe, and it was also known that precisely in the upper ranks of the army and the circles from which the army officers were drawn vice had spread like a plague. We had heard of the behaviour of the German troops in China. We had heard, too, of Zabern. It seemed only too compatible with what we had heard of these elements in Germany before the war, when we were told that the passage of the German troops through Belgium had been marked by orgies of bestial lust and cruelty.

Sometimes the line taken by German apologists is to point to the rigid discipline of the German Army. If we had any conception of that, they say, we should know that it is unthinkable that German troops in any circumstances should get out of hand. But this is to mistake the charge brought against the German Army. It is not alleged that atroci-

ties were committed by the soldiers contrary to orders; it is alleged that they were committed by order. They were regarded by the higher command as a useful means of striking terror into the population and preventing further resistance. Indeed, we may see that on a short view the calculation of the higher command has been justified by the event; the weaker nations have indeed been inspired since 1914 with a terror of Germany: it is probably Belgium, as much as anything, which has held back King Constantine from throwing in his lot with the Allies. On a longer view, the Germans by their conduct in Belgium and Northern France have done themselves an injury, the magnitude of which they will discover only progressively as the years go on. It was not a case of the breach of discipline, but of discipline itself perverted to devilish ends. The guilt for what was done rests far more upon the higher ranks of the army than upon the German common soldier.*

The atrocities committed by the German Army seem to have been committed by plan within certain definite areas at certain definite times. In other areas and at other times the conduct of the troops conformed with the civilized rules of war. It is this regulated inhumanity which gives the atrocities their special quality of horror. We see, not hordes of primitive barbarians tumbling into the

* See the Bryce Report, p. 44.

country and giving disorderly rein, wherever they came, to their hot-blooded propensities, but creatures with high organization who deliberately repudiate, when it suits their policy, scruples and inhibitions which are an essential part of humanity —not Huns, but Martians!

It is somewhat unfortunate, I think, that the name "Hun" has established itself as the term by which the English express their reprobation of the conduct of the Germans. It gives a wrong direction to our accusation. If we really meant to allege that the Germans were like the Huns, our charge would be refuted by the fact that in a large number of places the German Army behaved with propriety, that it was obviously a strictly disciplined army and not a primitive horde. If, on the other hand, our accusation, as I have stated it, is truly laid, all the proofs which the Germans can bring that their troops behaved with propriety whenever the higher command wished, make what was done within the selected areas only stand out the blacker.

The name "Hun," fixed upon the Germans, has caused a resentment in that country which we hardly realize. For we English give nicknames freely, even to our friends, and are much less thin-skinned than the Germans in these matters. And yet, even if the name "Hun" is inappropriate, there never was a nickname fixed upon a people by their enemies of which that people had less right

to complain, seeing that it was provided us by the German Emperor. Most people in England know that when the German troops were about to depart for China in 1900, they were addressed at Bremerhaven by the Emperor and told to regard the Huns of Attila as their model—it was, in fact, with express allusion to this speech of the Emperor's that the term began to be used in England early in the war. Few people in England, however, know that you may search the official collection of the Emperor William's many speeches in vain for this precious exhortation: the address to the troops about to sail for China is there, but there is nothing in it about Attila and his Huns. The words were recorded in the report of the speech published the day after it was delivered in the *Weser Zeitung*, and from the *Weser Zeitung* they were transmitted to the English newspapers and all over the world. There seems little doubt that they were genuine, one of the Emperor William's many unguarded utterances.*

* "All doubt on the matter has been set at rest by the arrival of the local newspapers containing a full report of the speech. According to the Bremen *Weser Zeitung*, the Emperor said:

"'When you meet the foe you will defeat him. No quarter will be given, no prisoners will be taken. Let all who fall into your hands be at your mercy. Just as the Huns a thousand years ago, under the leadership of Etzel (Attila), gained a reputation in virtue of which they still live in historical tradition, so may the name of Germany become known in such a manner in China that no Chinaman will ever again even dare to look askance at a German.'

"The reports of other newspapers in Bremen and Bremerhaven are almost identical" (*The Times*, July 30, 1900, p. 5).

In Germany there was an attempt to suppress them. But the attempt at the time caused mirth in German circles opposed to the Government. The Socialist *Vorwärts* published a series of letters from China headed "Hunnenbriefe" (Hun Letters). A comic paper had a picture of troops on review being searched for concealed notebooks and pencils, lest an inconvenient record should be made of Imperial speeches not good for the world to hear. After all this it is a little unreasonable, surely, for the Germans to make an outcry if their enemies call them Huns. It was surely inevitable, and yet, for the reason I have given, I think it unfortunate. The crimes alleged against the Germans would have been less horrible if they had been committed by Huns.

In the official version of the speech the passage is reduced to this:

"When you meet the foe, understand no quarter is given, no prisoners are made. Wield your weapons in such a way that for a thousand years to come no Chinaman will dare again to look askance at a German."

It is made to appear that it is the Chinese who give no quarter. If we accept the version of the *Weser Zeitung*, the context makes it indubitable that it is the German soldiers who are ordered to give no quarter.

CHAPTER VI

DIFFERENCES ON THE MAJOR PREMISE

THE great mountain of mutual reprobation which divides people in England from even good men in Germany is, as we have seen, a difference of judgment as to a series of occurrences. The conduct of the war by the German army is regarded by the English as having been in certain respects atrocious, whilst good men in Germany regard it as having been unexceptionable; the conduct of the English in entering the war is regarded by good men in Germany as having been due to the basest greed and malignity, whilst in England it is regarded as an act dictated by the two converging motives of rescuing Belgium and of repelling a vital danger to England itself.*

* The idea of two motives converging upon one and the same action is apparently too difficult a bit of psychology for the Germans. *The Times* once stated incidentally that England had not been impelled to go to war only by the desire to right the wrongs of Belgium, but by the necessity of protecting itself. This is certainly true. But the Germans instantly caught it up, and have since then continually repeated it, as an admission by *The Times* that the British solicitude for Belgium was all humbug. In their own case, however, they do not feel a similar difficulty. They will sometimes prove that the maintenance of the Hapsburg monarchy is a vital

Now, where people differ in their estimate of some particular set of actions, their disagreement in judgment may be due to a difference either in the major or in the minor premise. That sounds rather pedantic, but what I mean is this. The major premise states a general principle; the minor premise makes a statement of certain concrete facts; and the combination of the two produces the conclusion, or judgment. For instance, I may have a very hot and lively sense that a man I know has shown himself a scoundrel by cheating at cards. The process in my mind is then—

Major Premise: It is a highly disgraceful thing to cheat at cards (*general principle*);

Minor Premise: On such and such an occasion A cheated at cards (*statement of fact*);

Conclusion: Therefore A has committed a highly disgraceful action (*judgment*).

Suppose now I go, still burning with indignation, to see a friend of mine who knows A, and invite him to express his agreement with me as to A's conduct. He may refuse to do so; he may emphatically express his opinion that A has not committed any disgraceful action. There is the disagreement. Well, this may be due either to

interest for Germany; at other times they claim a special glory for their action in succouring Austria as an instance of "Nibelung fidelity." If two motives cannot converge upon one action, either the Germans do not see any interest of their own in the maintenance of Austria or the *Nibelungentreue* is all humbug.

my friend's rejecting my major premise, or to his rejecting my minor premise. He may accept the fact that on such and such an occasion A cheated, but say that he has no repulsion for the idea of cheating at cards (he denies my major premise); or, he may feel as strongly as I do the disgracefulness of cheating at cards, but maintain that A did not, as a matter of fact, do what he is alleged to have done (he denies my minor case). In either case the result is that where I am hot, he is cold. The result is so far the same, but it makes all the difference, for my future relations with my friend, which of my premises it is that my friend denies. A disagreement as to the minor premise is far less serious than a disagreement as to the major premise. I could go on being on cordial terms with my friend if he simply disagreed with me as to a question of fact, but it would put a gulf between us if he held, as a matter of principle, that there was no harm in cheating at cards.

We at the present moment in England find ourselves in violent disagreement with a large number of people in Germany, whom we should otherwise believe to have civilized or Christian standards of conduct, as to a multitude of actions which Germans have done during the last three years. It makes all the difference to the way we think of them and to the way they think of us, to the possibility of our ever having relations with each other again,

whether this disagreement is due to a difference on the major or on the minor premise. I think it cannot be reasonably questioned that in the case of very many Germans it is a difference on the minor premise to which our opposition in judgment is *mainly* due. Our controversial literature in England is apt to make it out as essentially a difference on the major premise. It represents the Germans as repudiating our fundamental moral categories, as repudiating Christianity, as raising brute violence and falsehood into principles. And with regard to an influential part of German opinion our controversial literature does not seem to me to be wrong. It *is* a difference on the major premise which separates us from the Germany for which General Bernhardi speaks. A difference on the major premise separates us from the Imperialism of Rüddorffer and Eduard Meyer and Erich Marcks, which, according to Professor Ernst Troeltsch, "thinks in terms of biology or of old-German Pagan heroism or Roman love of power, or even in the style of Assyrian deportations."* But from the Germany which Professor Troeltsch himself represents it seems to me that we are separated by a disagreement on the minor, rather than the major, premise. If Professor Troeltsch or Naumann or Deissmann saw the facts of the German invasion of Belgium and North France, the facts of the German methods

* *Die Neue Rundschau* for February, 1916.

of warfare as we see them, I do not think their judgment would differ very much from ours;* if we believed the facts of England's action to be what they believe them to be, I do not think our judgment on England would differ very much from theirs. And there are no doubt a great multitude of people now our enemies of whom the same might be said.

It was observed just now that a disagreement between people on a minor premise is less serious than a disagreement on a major premise, and this is true in the sense that the opponents can continue to feel at one on the question of principle. But it does not mean that a disagreement on the minor premise is necessarily easy to do away; even if it permits mutual feelings of respect to subsist, it may for all practical purposes constitute an enduring barrier. The Germans' minor premise is the official presentation of the facts leading up to the war and the facts of the war. It is held by good, just as much as by bad, Germans. And there is no ground to suppose or hope that, until the ordeal of war to which Germany has appealed has decided against her, there will be any slackening in the in-

* "All sein wilder Hass gegen Deutschland gründet sich auf vermeintliche Tatsachen, die, wenn sie zu Recht bestanden ihn allerdings rechtfertigen würden"—"All his wild hatred of Germany is based upon supposed facts, which, if they were true, *would certainly justify it*" (H. Meyer-Benfay in *Die Hilfe* for January 25, 1917, p. 60. He is speaking of Verhaeren).

tensity of conviction with which good Germans hold to the official view of the facts. All the mythology about King Edward VII. and Viscount Grey, about England's commercial jealousy, and Russia's unprovoked attack, and Belgium's compact with England, will be truths, to question which would be a psychological impossibility. And then we must remember that quite apart from the initial docility and credulity of Germans, learned and simple, it is impossible for anyone who has been living all through the war in Germany to have adequate evidence before him, so long as war conditions last.

It might be said that if the recognition that our division from good Germans does not spring from a vital disagreement on the major premise leaves the fact of the division, and the practical consequences of the division, just as they were, the recognition has little value. I think this a mistake. It would imply that feelings did not matter in themselves, that only the external actions to which they gave rise mattered. But if good men in England and good men in Germany can continue to believe that they are still at one on fundamental moral principles and can mutually respect each other's motives, then, even if that recognition cannot express itself in any friendly actions, it is surely not a little thing at the present time, and it is something that lightens the future with a ray of hope. Something is gained

if such men can think about each other with inward charity and exercise patience for the time being with each other's beliefs and disbeliefs.

There are people amongst us, of " pacifist " ideas, who, moved by a right desire to effect reconciliation, take the wholly mistaken course, as I believe, of trying to minimize or blurr the disagreement on the minor premise. They try to divert attention, as far as they can, from the charges which either side makes against the other, to cover them up in obscurity. The only real remedy is not obscurity, but daylight. The fullest, freest, most rigorous inquiry as to all the mutual charges is the only way in which that division can ever in some future be done away. When anybody tries to make out that what was done in Belgium and France was not so very bad after all, or not worse than any other European army would have done, they do not make English people feel in the least more friendly to Germans. They only make them angry, and stir up their feeling of detestation. There is, I believe, another course which people who desire to abate hatred might take, and which would be far more effectual for the end they have in view. Instead of trying to palliate the bad deeds of Germans, they might bring into notice the good deeds of Germans. For unquestionably during this conflict there have been instances in which Germans have dealt honourably towards their enemies, have shown humanity and

courtesy. Even among the documents which convict the Germans of misconduct, you may find some like that note in the handwriting of a German non-commissioned officer, which protests against what the writer saw going on:

"This way of making war is purely barbarous. I am astonished that we could make any complaint of the conduct of the Russians, for we conduct ourselves in France in a much worse fashion, and on every occasion and on the smallest pretext we have burnt and plundered. But God is just and sees everything: His mills grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small."*

No doubt many others in Germany to-day may know what has been done in Germany's name and loathe it with their whole heart, yet esteem it a patriotic duty, in present circumstances, to remain hidden. And where we from outside see only universal apostasy from Divine and human standards there may yet be the seven thousand left to the true God, as distinguished from the German God—"All the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."

If instances of this kind were authenticated and collected, they would not, indeed, make us think any better of the German misdeeds and the men who perpetrated or commanded them, but they would make many people, who now, owing to the

* Bédier, "How Germany seeks to justify her Atrocities" (Paris: Armand Colin, 1915), p. 46.

baser sort of journalism, think of the Germans as all cut out of one stuff, apprehend the existence of good Germans as a reality.

One reason, no doubt, why some well-meaning people regard with suspicion any attempt to show that there are good Germans, is because they are afraid that, if this were once believed, there would be a tendency to show weakness in dealing with the German State, to relax our effort in reliance upon such good-will, supposed to be existing somewhere in Germany, as a possible check upon Germany's public action. It will, therefore, be as well to say emphatically that no such suggestion is intended here. It would indeed be a dangerous illusion to suppose that the influence of these people could ever make it possible for us to conclude with the German State a "peace without victory." It must be remembered how very little check the opinion of good Germans exercises upon the action of Germany—much less so than the opinion of good Englishmen upon the action of England. This, of course, is partly due to the comparative impotence of the representative assemblies in Germany as against the Government, and would to that extent be altered, if the movement for effective parliamentary control in Germany—a movement the existence of which it is well for us to remember—ever prevailed over the grim Conservative resistance.

But it is not only that the opinion of good men

outside Government circles in Germany finds no organ ready provided in the Constitution, by which it can control the Government: it is that the opinion of good men in Germany is itself more largely determined by the Government than in England. To a greater degree than in England it has been customary in Germany for the individual citizen to regard the conduct of his country in foreign affairs as a matter for experts, something about which he has no right to have any opinion of his own. The mode in which facts are presented in Government pronouncements or in a Government-controlled press has been accepted without question. It is only in Social Democrat circles—opposed on principle to the Government—that there was before the war any objective criticism in foreign and colonial politics. It is not so much that the constitutional powers of the representative assemblies are inadequate, as that their will to exert independent thought is not there. And it is curious to-day that we find complaints of the absence of any public opinion as to foreign affairs, not only in circles with Liberal or pacifist tendencies, but amongst the Jingoes, when they are wanting to work up a popular movement strong enough to drive the Government into more ruthless measures of war. The Jingo National-Liberal, Dr. Stresemann, speaking last December in the Reichstag, even admitted that England had in this matter an advantage over Germany.

" The frank and open criticism " (he said), " which is characteristic of England, has really done England no harm. We, on the other hand, *have* been harmed by the notion which largely prevails amongst us in questions of foreign policy—that you can carry on a world-war by strictly confidential methods, as it were, and screened from all publicity. How do things stand to-day in this country ? Look at our position with regard to the outside world ! Look at the position the Reichstag holds in Germany ! Would an increase of the competence of the Reichstag really involve any danger ? An eminent German diplomat was telling me a little while ago that what makes the task of representing Germany abroad such a difficult one is the low estimate in which German public opinion is held in other countries—the parliamentary impotence, which is ascribed to us by foreigners, who regard, indeed, our parliaments as even more impotent than they actually are. He told me a story out of his own experience. Once he tried to make the English Ambassador understand that public opinion in Germany would not stand this or that, and that in order to obviate conflicts he felt bound to point out that this would never do, if public opinion in Germany was not to be exasperated. The Ambassador answered: ' That is exactly what I keep on writing in my despatches; but in London they do not believe that there *is* any public opinion in Germany of which they need to take account.' "

And Streseman himself seems to hold that there was too much truth in London's estimate, since he goes on:

" I ask myself, ought our experiences in this war not to have brought us a little farther on this road ? . . .

Multitudes in Germany even to-day are still torpid with regard to these questions (*liegen ja heute überhaupt brach bei diesen Fragen*)."*

From the opposite political wing we get similar complaints. The pacifist H. von Gerlach wrote in June, 1915, in *Die Welt am Montag:*

"The part of the Reichstag during the war has been little more than to vote the money asked for by the Government and to furnish a decorative frame for the speeches of Ministers. Over some of the important questions an unnecessary veil of secrecy has been drawn by the Reichstag, whilst so limited a time has been assigned for discussion that any real control of the Government is impossible. This is bad for our home policy: for our foreign policy it may turn out even disastrous."†

If, even in those who are so far active politicians as to get themselves elected members of the Reichstag, independent criticism is so rare, we can imagine what the case must be with the ordinary private citizen. If those in the country who wished to push the Government into a policy of indefinite ambition once secured the necessary influence upon the supreme direction, the fact that there was a large number of people in Germany who cared for righteousness was no more of a check than a cog-wheel would be, moving out of contact with the mechanism. However firmly such good men and

* *Deutsche Stimmen* for November 10, 1916, pp. 854, 855.
† Quoted in *Vorwärts*, June 22, 1915.

women might be trusted to hold their major premises, it was always certain that the Government could detach their conclusions from reality, by supplying the requisite minor premises, the officially authorized view of the facts. A good deal has been made by apologists for Germany of the estimable sentiments which those who represent the German mind at its best have expressed in writings and speeches during the war. It has given one, indeed, in these last few weeks an odd feeling to turn from some of the reasonable, high-minded, moral, or even Christian, writing which lies before one in German books or periodicals and find out there in the field of action Germany still plunging along incorrigibly in its career of villainous outrage—torpedoing hospital ships, and destroying the homes and small belongings of hundreds of villagers, repeating such ravages as had been marked by history as an obsolete barbarism characterizing the wars of three hundred years ago—these same people who had raised such an outcry because certain villages in East Prussia were destroyed in 1914. It is not necessary to suppose that the estimable utterances we have before us are insincere. It is only necessary to realize that they count for absolutely nothing, so far as the public action of Germany goes. The mental attitude of the writers is, as we have seen, such that they have renounced all idea of subjecting the official presentment of the facts to any criticism,

that on the minor premise they have entirely surrendered their individual judgment to the State.

This view allows us to hold that the Germans, whom before the war we honoured as men of high purpose and whom now we find applauding the prosecution of an atrocious war, are not divided from us as much as might appear by a disagreement as to any major premise, that they still recognize the same principles of conduct as we do, and only take a different view of the action of their country because they have a different belief as to the facts.

When we charge the Germans with carrying on war by atrocious methods, there may be one of three lines of defence, according to the case, on the German side: (1) They may deny that the action which we allege was ever done. (2) They may admit that it was done, but justify it by alleging circumstances which we deny. (3) They may justify it on principle. Neither of the first two lines of defence carries us beyond a disagreement on the minor premise.

1. The first line of defence is taken in regard to the great mass of atrocities charged against the German Army—massacres and ravishings—which were witnessed by so limited a number of people that the evidence, even if convincing to us, may be disputed in Germany.

2. In the case, however, of many of the actions which we stigmatize—the bombarding of various towns from the sea or the air, the sinking of pas-

senger ships, the employment of poisonous gas and liquid fire—there is no question that the thing was done. The Germans do not deny that they bombarded Scarborough, and sunk hospital ships, and used poisonous gas. They justify the action by asserting the existence of certain circumstances. They say that Scarborough was fortified and that hospital ships are used to carry munitions of war, and that we used poisonous gas first. Here still, that is to say, we have a question of fact, rather than one of principle. To us the contrary of the facts they allege seems so obvious that it is hard for us to take their defence seriously. The idea, for instance, that Scarborough or Whitby, two seaside resorts for families on holiday with babies and nurses, could be regarded as fortified places, that the bombarding of them could serve any genuine military purpose, seems simply ludicrous. (Hartlepool was a different matter; I do not think that we have ever denied the German right to regard that place as fortified.) Or in the matter of the use of gas, the question which side used it first is settled for us by the categorical statements of Lord French. It will be remembered in England that after the first German gas attack in May, 1915, Lord French's despatch contained the following sentences:

"A week before the Germans first used this method they announced in their official communiqués that we were making use of asphyxiating gases. At the time

there appeared to be no reason for this astonishing falsehood, but now, of course, it is obvious that it was a part of the scheme. It is a further proof of the deliberate nature of the introduction by the Germans of a new and illegal weapon, and shows that they recognize its illegality and were anxious to forestall neutral, and possibly domestic, criticism. The effect of this poison is not merely disabling, or even painlessly fatal, as suggested in the German press. Those of its victims who do not succumb on the field, and who can be brought into hospital, suffer acutely, and in a large proportion of cases die a painful and lingering death. Those who survive are in little better case, as the injury to their lungs appears to be of a permanent character and reduces men to a condition which points to their being invalids for life. These effects must be well known to the German scientists who devised this new weapon and to the military authorities who have sanctioned its use. I am of opinion that the enemy has definitely decided to use these gases as a normal procedure, and that protests will be useless."*

* *The Times*, May 5, 1915. Perhaps in this connexion the following narrative by a German war-correspondent may be significant: "It was on the morning after the first advance at Langemarck and Poelcapelle. . . . Before the church the captured Canadians and Senegalese who had come under our gas clouds lay on the pavement . . . the Canadians, with their powerful frames and apathetic faces, who had no interest in anything in Flanders and had only allowed themselves to be hired by England for a few shillings a day, and the Senegalese, who, like animals, carried round arm or neck their identification tablets. They were coughing as they recovered from the *gently quelling power* (*mild überwältigende Wucht*) of our newest weapons. Our little 'Grey-greens' stood by with their fresh faces, their bayonets fixed, and could not help laughing. And I laughed too. *Honi soit qui mal y pense.* The psychology of the front is different from the psychology of the study. It is a sort of heroical comedy, when the enemy makes an onset with bayonet and sword,

The German press usually gives a complete translation of the official bulletins of the enemy.* It is significant that these damning remarks of Lord French were not communicated to the German public.

It is natural, of course, that each side should believe the statements of its own military authorities rather than those of the enemy. And this is not to admit that we have the blind uncritical faith which we have pointed to in the Germans. We have never found our authorities, during the course of the war, make a plain and unambiguous statement which proved contrary to fact. If the Germans could point to any statement on our side analogous to the German official statement about the mythical air-raid on Liverpool, our confidence in the veracity of British official statements would be proportionately modified. As it is, the facts alleged by the Germans, as justifying circumstances, seem so palpably non-existent from our standpoint that

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and succumbs to an attack of *coughing!* When, however, the doctors came and began to bring the help of oxygen to those whose difficulty in breathing was excessive, our people with the red crosses on their arms carried off the prisoners like children, delighted as full life came back into them" (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, May 9, 1915).

* Theodor Wolff points out the difference between the censorship in France and Germany. In France *news* is much more strictly censored than in Germany, whilst great latitude is allowed for comment and criticism. In Germany the enemy bulletins are generally published in full, and news from the enemies' side given with fair completeness, whereas the *expression of opinion* is to a large extent forbidden (*Berliner Tageblatt*, November 15, 1915, morning).

it is hard to realize that it is a question of fact at all, or that people looking at the matter from Germany can approve the bombardment of Scarborough and the use of poisonous gas without subscribing to barbarous principles. Yet a question of fact it is; and all that has been said about a difference of judgment due to a difference on the minor premise applies just as much where the question at issue is whether such and such circumstances existed, as where the question is whether the action itself was done or not.

3. But the actions may be admitted and justified on principle, making disagreement the deeper sort of division, disagreement on a major premise. For in certain respects one must recognize that we have to do with diverse scales of value. There *is* a difference between the English and the German attitude to life (*Weltanschauung*). Even men's belief as to facts (as we have mentioned before) is to some extent determined by their special temperament. One respect in which it appears to me that behind the German contention there is a deeper-lying difference, a difference in the appraisement of values, is seen in the attempts made to justify "frightfulness" on principle. Even good people in Germany seem to have, not only a different view from us as to certain facts, but a different standard as to what is permissible in war. In German military circles it can hardly be disputed that a different

standard prevails, and that cruelties are perpetrated by command, if they are thought to further the chances of victory, from which the conscience and feeling of civilized humanity would shrink with abhorrence. It would no doubt be a mistake to attribute the same callousness to all Germans, to identify the spirit shown in the uglier manifestations of militarism with the spirit of Meinecke and Troeltsch, Naumann and Harnack, and all the part of Germany which such men represent. Yet it can hardly be that where one important part of the community is characterized by a singular degree of callousness, there is not some want of sensibility in the community as a whole. I think it would be found that the reason why good men in Germany contemplate with complacency, or even applause, such actions as the sinking of the *Lusitania* or the Belgian deportations, is not only that they believe in the existence of certain justifying circumstances, but that they acquiesce more easily in the hypothesis of justifying circumstances because they have a comparatively less strong inner revulsion from atrocious actions performed by authorized agents of their Government. A lower degree of sensibility renders them more easily satisfied. Additional proof of this comparative insensibility is to be seen in the ignoring by religious German apologists of the expression of atrocious sentiments by other German writers and speakers. Sometimes when

their utterances are brought forward, apologists for Germany will plead that such expressions are characteristic of one section only of German opinion. This book has admitted that there is justice in the plea. Yet the fact that the utterances of this section have produced so feeble a reaction of repudiation in other sections is evidence that in Germany they had not much power to shock. Religious circles in Germany were perhaps genuinely unconscious that the air was becoming poisoned. If you read what a man like Adolf Deissmann used to write to conciliate American opinion, you would never gather that such a thing as Bernhardism existed in Germany; he is all innocence. The philosopher, Rudolf Eucken, at the beginning of the war declared indignantly that neither he nor his friends knew anything about Bernhardi. That was just it. They ought to have known the evil that was increasingly impregnating the German atmosphere. If a man walking through the midst of a horrible smell tells you that he detects no odour, you infer that he has not a sensitive nose. An analogous insensibility to a certain kind of moral evil spreading throughout Germany (except in some exceptional circles, represented by men like Schücking of Marburg, or Förster of Munich, or included in the Social Democrat "Minority") led to a variance in judgment which constitutes a difference on a major premise.

To be fair, we must, of course, remember that to draw the line between humanity and inhumanity in war is not altogether a simple matter. Taken by itself it is not a kind thing to do to thrust a bayonet into a man's body. When we have once entered upon war we have left our old rules of conduct towards our fellow-men behind—not, perhaps, our fundamental principles of conduct, but certainly our ordinary rules of behaviour. Yet, if we are fighting as a civilized or a Christian nation, we have not plunged into a sea of inhumanity with no determining limits. Although the old delimiting lines are abandoned, there are new lines to be observed. I once heard someone whimsically maintain that the Germans had committed atrocities because they had been given to understand that the point of war was that you just did the opposite of what you did in peace. Sometimes Germans are inclined to justify atrocities simply on the plea that war is war, and that because it is inhumane anyway, it is ridiculous softness to make a fuss about particular actions. So far as they take that line they give ground to my friend's construction. When on either side it is said that "the most ruthless measures of the war are the most humane" or that "moderation in war is a mistake," this is a loose and inaccurate mode of expression. No one nowadays, even in Germany, would dare to maintain before the world in theory (whatever they may do

in practice) that literally *every* infliction of pain upon members of the enemy nation was legitimate —the torture of prisoners, for instance, in the view of their kinsmen, not unknown to ancient warfare. Even those who talk in the way described have in their minds *some* line separating the legitimate from the illegitimate infliction of pain: what they mean is that to shrink *from coming up to this line* out of humanitarian sentiment is a mistake. We may draw the line in a different place from where they do; but we should equally say that to shrink from coming up to the line, as we draw it, was a mistake. It is when we ask where the new lines are to be drawn that considerable possibilities of doubt and difference of opinion appear. Where is the precise dividing-line between killing men with gas and killing them with bayonets or explosive shells? The agony of a death by gas seems in a large number of cases to be more long-drawn-out, but the difference is one only of degree. The Germans say that if the sinking of the *Lusitania* was inhumane because it involved incidentally the drowning of a number of innocent women and children, our blockade of Germany must be inhumane because it involves, if successful, the starving of a much larger number of innocent women and children. We on our side may point out the differences between the two cases —that there could be no possible military advantage from the sinking of a passenger-boat propor-

tionate to the number of innocent persons killed; that, the ship once torpedoed, the death of the women and children must follow so swiftly that there would be no opportunity for the belligerent enemy to save them by a diversion of powers otherwise directed to war; that, on the other hand, in the pressure exercised upon Germany the Germans could always supply the needs of their women and children if they withdrew something from their armies, or they could have the blockade raised at any moment by surrender, and we can urge (as we continually do urge) that there is no difference in principle between what the Germans did to Paris in 1871 and what the Allies are doing to Germany to-day.

This points to one way in which a line is commonly drawn between the permissible and the not permissible infliction of suffering in war—usage as recognized by the nations of modern European civilization. It has been recognized as a permissible measure of war that the enemy may be reduced by the cutting off of food-supplies from a whole population. For any difference the Germans may try to establish between the case of Paris and their own case on the score of numbers is obviously futile—as if a population up to a certain number of millions might legitimately be reduced by hunger and it became wicked to apply to a population above this figure such a form of pressure! As a matter of

fact, it had been taken for granted, as early as the time of Caprivi, that in the event of a war with England, Germany's sea-borne food-supplies would be cut off, and this was one of the regular arguments which the Agrarian party used in their campaign for protective duties in favour of German agriculture: the Germans also made it no secret that it was a form of pressure they would gladly apply to England. One of the most curious features, indeed, of German mentality disclosed in this war is the wide difference between the moral canons they apply to their own conduct with regard to other people and those they apply to the conduct of other people with regard to themselves. If the very same things which they do to others, apparently with a complete absence of feeling, are done to themselves, they fill the heavens with piercing cries of self-pity. It is a somewhat unfortunate characteristic in a people and cannot increase the respect felt for them by the surrounding world.*

* Since writing these sentences, I have read Professor Troeltsch's article in *Die Neue Rundschau* for February, 1917, in which he taxes the English with the very same inconsistency. (We shall see in other instances how strangely the mutual accusations coincide!) His instance, however, is a complete misstatement. He says that the English think it all right to starve Germany, but charge the Germans with barbarity when they try to starve England. This is untrue. It has always been recognized in England that if the Germans could cut off England's food-supply by the legitimate methods of naval warfare, they would be entitled by the laws of war to do so. We accuse the submarine war, not of barbarity *to England*, but of barbarity to the crews and passengers of non-combatant ships sunk without their being given the chance of escape.

But usage is by no means a sufficient guide in drawing the line between the permissible and the barbarous in war. For with the advance of science, as this war has shown, wholly new methods and instruments of war come to be at the disposal of belligerents, and we find ourselves, as it were, in a moral tract hitherto uncharted. There were no precedents in any previous war to mark out what was right or wrong in the matter of air-raids or the use of poisonous gas. What was said some way back as to the line separating legitimate from culpable departures from the established rule in the matter of veracity and fidelity to engagements applies here. The line which in war determines how far men may inflict suffering and death upon each other without barbarism can be drawn only by the moral judgment—not by any process of mathematical demonstration. It will be for the moral judgment of mankind ultimately to pronounce, after a complete survey of the facts, whether, as we English believe, the cutting off of Germany's external food-supply was a lawful measure of war and the German submarine campaign an outrage. So far as appears at present, the English judgment in this matter has the greater body of support in the *orbis terrarum*. With regard to the use of poison gas, and air-raids upon enemies' towns, the fact that the Germans *began* these methods of warfare will cause the Germans to appear as the side

which was always for drawing the line between the legitimate and the illegitimate in the direction of greater cruelty.

Before leaving this subject one may note that a common way in which the Germans try to convict the English of hypocrisy, when the English bring charges of cruelty against them, is by alleging that the English committed as bad atrocities in the Boer War. Once more we are brought up against a question of fact, a minor premise. It is certain that many Germans believe as firmly that the English committed atrocities in South Africa as the English believe that the Germans committed atrocities in Belgium. It is not necessary here to go into the question what exactly took place in South Africa—how far the concentration camps for women and children were a justifiable measure in the circumstances, or how far the infant mortality in the camps was due to culpable negligence on the part of the English and how far to an accidental epidemic. It is not necessary because the Germans cannot bring these charges against the British without accusing their own military authorities, who issued the German official history of the war, of untruthfulness. We read there:

"In view of the many errors, disseminated at the time by a badly informed press throughout the whole world, as to the conduct of the war by the English, it is the duty of a truth-loving historical account, compiled

from a knowledge of the actual circumstances, to lay stress upon the fact that the behaviour of the British was as chivalrous and humane as that of the Boers always was, so long as they were opposed by the regular Boer forces, which were distinguishable as such. But, after the occupation of Bloemfontein, the loosely organized and badly disciplined militia forces of the Boers broke up. Those still in the field were often merely irregulars, and no longer recognizable externally as combatants. By degrees they adopted guerilla tactics which, by obliterating the distinction between a really combatant force and a hostile population, were bound naturally to arouse a constantly increasing feeling of bitterness among the British troops, which were often menaced, and this not only explains much of their severity, but also justifies it. If, therefore, the English authorities subsequently adopted on several occasions increasingly severe reprisals, which often made their conduct of the war appear harsh, yet they did so, in the majority of cases, only in accordance with their duty, and the justifiable protection of the lives of those under their command."*

Supposing the Bryce Commission, having examined the evidence with regard to what happened in Belgium, had pronounced the charges against the Germans to be without foundation and Englishmen had gone on making the charges nevertheless, the Germans might then indeed have taxed them with such a wilful persistence in false statement as came little short of lying. They would have been

* "The War in South Africa, prepared in the Historical Section of the Great General Staff, Berlin," authorized translation by Colonel W. H. H. Waters, R.A., C.V.O. (John Murray, 1904), p. 211.

persisting in spite of the most authoritative pronouncement on their own side. That is just what Germans are doing, when they bring these accusations against the British. I do not mean that from *our* point of view a testimonial given us by the German Great General Staff should be enough to dispense us from the duty of self-examination. We might very well satisfy the standards of the Great General Staff without satisfying those of our own better self. But I do mean that it is hardly open to *Germans*, who go on regarding their official bulletins as infallible, to bring these charges against us.

Another respect in which the opposition between British and German is commonly said to be an opposition of ideas, of two different views of the world, is in the value which the German puts upon the idea of the State. In connexion with this, each side censures the attitude to life it believes to be characteristic of the other. It is a common charge against Germans in England that they set the claims of the German State above every other claim—humanity, morality, religion—so that any action commanded by the State, or any action which tends to increase the power of the German State, as against other States, is to be regarded as a good action, whatever laws and sanctities and inhibitions it may violate: *Deutschland über Alles*, literally over everything. It is a common charge against the English in Germany, that their principle of

conduct is a self-willed Individualism, each man indisposed to sacrifice his individual profit or pleasure to the community: the English are deficient in that sense of duty (*Pflichtgefühl*) which is the basis, we are assured, of German life.

At other times—somewhat inconsistently, it would seem—the charge brought against the English is the same charge that the English bring against the Germans, that they set the claims of their country above all moral considerations. The Germans have understood that some Englishman—I do not know who (a friend tells me that it was really an American!)—once uttered the maxim, "Right or wrong, my country," and they have curiously got the idea that this is a popular maxim in England. They bring it up against us just as we bring up *Deutschland über Alles* against them. As a matter of fact, while *Deutschland über Alles* is as familiar everywhere in Germany as "God save the King" is in England, I wonder whether one Englishman in a hundred has ever heard of the maxim, "Right or wrong, my country."* There are certainly as many

* One may be allowed in a footnote a digression which has no reference to the relations of England and Germany, but is suggested by the absurd statement of Eduard Meyer that the English have no equivalent for the German "*Vaterland*." Of course, "country" is commonly used and has the required halo of sentiment about it. But no doubt a still greater passional value is attached to the proper name "England" itself. English poets will furnish abundant instances; Henley's "England, my England," Rudyard Kipling's "Who stands, if England fall? Who dies, if England live?" come to the mind at the first moment. The trouble, however, is that

people in England as in any country, who would repudiate the maxim emphatically, if it were proposed to them as an ethical theorem. We need not deny that there are also a large number of Englishmen who in any international quarrel would support their country's side irrespective of moral considerations—of course there are; and a still larger number who, while professing, and no doubt

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"England," strictly speaking, is the name of part only of the United Kingdom. Scotchmen and Irishmen often object to its being used as signifying the whole. For them the same sentiment attaches to "bonny Scotland" or "old Ireland." What Eduard Meyer might have said with truth is that *there is no proper name of emotional quality for the whole of Great Britain*—still less for the whole family of States under King George which the *Round Table* school is now teaching us to call the "Commonwealth," instead of the "Empire." We have nothing in English analogous to "Deutschland." Try substituting the name of "Great Britain" for "England" in the poets, and observe the effect. If, therefore, we want to use a name for this whole such as will commend itself to Scotchmen and Irishmen as well as Englishmen proper, we have to keep to "country." The emotional value of this word is often raised—making it perhaps equivalent to "England" in this respect—by joining to it the epithet "old." Our soldiers talk about "fighting for the old country." A Canadian or Australian is more likely to talk about fighting "for the old country" than "for England." A writer, however, who has to use proper names continually for the countries about which he is writing is obliged often to subordinate political accuracy to literary exigency and say "England" where he means "Great Britain and Ireland." When, for instance, we personify a country, as it is often convenient to do, talk about it desiring or thinking, when we use the pronoun "her" rather than "its," "England" lends itself to this usage and "Great Britain" does not. The Dual Monarchy is in a similar case. "Austria-Hungary" is an intolerably clumsy name for literary purposes, so that writers are continually driven to say "Austria" where they mean both the States subject to the Hapsburg Crown.

believing themselves, to be guided by moral considerations, would really in any international quarrel have their minds made up beforehand in favour of their country. But it would be hard to establish any difference in this respect between England and any other country. On the other hand, there are probably in England an exceptionally large number of those characters who get the sense of superiority they crave, not as most people do, by sharing the popular feeling of superiority to some foreign enemy, but by cherishing their own individual superiority to the people round them, as the few just ones in a world of base motives, the few honest ones in a world of cant. Of these are the people who in any international quarrel have their minds made up beforehand that their country is in the wrong. England has never in recent years been engaged in any difficulty with other States, but there have been Englishmen and Englishwomen who thought they gave proof of moral greatness by taking the side of their nation's adversary. Yet, apart from both perversions, there have always been Englishmen equally free from national, and from anti-national, prejudice, who sincerely tried to judge according to righteousness. No doubt in other countries also such men are to be found.

Of course, a great deal of what we read in England as to the German worship of the State is true of only a section of German opinion. It is not true

that the best German opinion regards the German State as above all moral obligations, as existing simply for the increase of power, as rightly actuated by an egoism which is "essentially unlimited," etc. No doubt, expressions to this effect can be collected from eminent Germans, from Hegel to Professor Eduard Meyer, but in Germany itself they would be repudiated by an important body of opinion. What, however, does seem true is that such expressions represent the extreme form of a tendency which is characteristic of modern Germany as a whole. Professor Troeltsch, who argues against the views of Eduard Meyer, himself states his belief that "the significance of the State for the present and immediate future rises upon us in an almost staggering way" (*Neue Rundschau* of February, 1916). Even in its more moderate and reasonable form the German exaltation of the State is likely to have something repellent and boring for Englishmen, but I am not sure whether we could establish between our own attitude to life and the moderate German view any such profound moral difference as would constitute a bar to intercourse. It seems that what we have here is rather a question of different temperaments, each of which might cheerfully tolerate the existence of the other in a world of variety. To some extent, no doubt, the German's exaltation of the State, even in its more moderate form, predisposes the German, not only

to obey the State where his individual conscience would lead him otherwise, but also to allow his conscience to be made for him by the State. That is no doubt the danger of the German view.

Where the Germans speak as if the only alternative to their doctrine of the State were an Individualism destitute of the sense of duty, they are, of course, quite wrong. So far as an Englishman is moral, he has a sense of social duty, of obligation to serve the community. The difference between his view and the German's is rather in his conception of the community. For the German the community is essentially what one may call the *uniformed* community, the hierarchy of officials, whose movement is all ordered and adjusted by rule, and in which the individual finds his part prescribed to him by an authority invested with quasi-mystical sanctity. For the Englishman the community is just the people round about him, the people of England, living their individual lives in spontaneous variety, but all as part of a great undefined national life, with the obligation upon every individual to seek, so far as his lights go, the good of the people round him, or the good of the people generally, and so make his own self-determined contribution to the national life. The State exists for him merely as a means to safeguard the spontaneous human relations, and is jealously kept from hampering and restricting these human rela-

tions by extending its sphere a whit more than may be necessary for their safeguarding. He becomes intensely conscious of the State only in moments like the present, when England, as a whole, is threatened by an outside enemy; and then he is capable of temporarily subordinating himself to an organization almost of the German pattern. But he fights and dies, not in order to save the State, in the sense of a political system held together by respect for gold-laced official authority, but in order to keep inviolate the old peaceful human life of England, typified by a King who is just an Englishman doing his duty quietly and naturally—the restful reality of ordinary working life, without any theatrical airs.

The German is essentially a man who likes being drilled. There is, I think, no harm in liking to be drilled. We can understand the exhilaration which comes from having one's part in the movements of a great body rhythmically ordered, as a chorus or a company of soldiers marching with a band. Each individual feels in himself the impressiveness of the effect made by the whole, and steps more proudly before the lookers-on. The German loves the pulse and discipline of corporate movement, the uniforms and the drums. It is because the State for him represents that kind of thing, a great body, moving rhythmically to the word of command, in which he has a definite part assigned him, that the sense of

it gives him satisfaction and dignity. We English can appreciate the feeling, we can see that there is an impressiveness about rhythmic corporate movement that you cannot get in any other way, and that for certain purposes such movement is the only efficient one. But there is also a value in the spontaneous manifestations of life—a beauty in the wood as well as in the formal garden—and the English get quickly bored with being drilled. Because British officers, before the war, liked in private life to get out of their uniforms as soon as possible, Professor Eduard Meyer delightfully infers in his book "England" that Englishmen thought that service in the army was something to be ashamed of! There is no reason why, because woods are pleasant in their way, there should not be formal gardens as well. There is no reason why the Englishman and the German should not mutually recognize each other's right to exist. Our own temperament has its snares as well as the German; we know well enough how much in these last three years our lack of co-ordination and precision, of ordered corporate movement, has cost us. Even in its more moderate form, the German devotion to the State is never likely to be ours. But in its moderate form it does not seem to involve any moral conflict with our theory of life. Only to-day it is hard for us to look even at its moderate form without reprobation, because we see in it a tendency

which in its extremer forms has helped to bring such immeasurable disaster upon all the world.

One should take note of the fact that among German thinkers one may still find even to-day some who are acutely conscious of the drawbacks of the German State system. One representative of this section of opinion is Hugo Preuss, who during the war has produced a book, "Das deutsche Volk und die Politik." The book had a sympathetic review by G. Anschütz in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* (May, 1916)—a review which may show us that the old Liberal Germany has not entirely disappeared in the delirium of these later days.

Why, asks the reviewer, do other peoples hate the Germans? There are, of course, a variety of causes—French desire for revenge, English jealousy, Russian lust for conquest, general suspicion of Germany because of its alleged ambition to gain world-dominion (God save the mark!); but the chief cause is that Germany is felt by the other nations to represent another type of political structure.

Germany is the anti-democratic island in the midst of a world growing more and more democratic. According to the ideas prevalent in Western Europe and America, State and Nation coincide—the authority in the State represents the will of the people; whereas in Germany, "as I" (says the reviewer) "must sorrowfully admit in agreement with the author," the conception of the oneness of State and

People "has never established itself in that way which would correspond with the level reached by Germany in other departments of civilization."

In Germany the nation is held together as a unity by a will outside of itself, enthroned above it: it is a community without a communal will. Those who belong to such a State are not properly *members:* they can indeed claim the protection of the State, but they cannot demand to co-operate in the shaping and execution of the general will.

This is what some Germans praise as the "Conservative structure" of the German State. Austria (not Hungary) resembles Germany in political type. Once Bismarck contemplated an alliance of the "Conservative" States against the "Republican." To-day his would-be alliance is hard beset by the others, and one member of it, Russia, has gone over to the other side. How comes Russia, the anti-democratic State *par excellence*, "Holy Russia," in this strange company? The author's explanation is that the democratic Powers have *hired* Russia for the wage of gratifying its ambition. This, says the reviewer, is true; but it is also true that there is a certain homogeneity between Russia and the Western Powers.

"It is possible, nay, probable, that these Powers see in Germany, as against Russia, the more dangerous upholder of the political principle they hate—more dangerous because stronger internally—and maybe in this they are right. Perhaps the principle of State authority

is even more firmly established amongst us than in Russia, and it certainly has more resisting power, for the very reason that it has always kept clear of Russian excesses. The Russian *Intelligentsia* has been profoundly infected by the political ideas of the West. In Russia there is nothing to correspond with those pillars of our political system which one can sum up under the term 'Feudalism.' In the Russian peasant class, whose complete economic liberation is only a matter of yesterday, there are strong latent potentialities of democratic development. These and other potentialities might one day become actualities through a revolution, and the will to accomplish a revolution is more conceivable—so thinks the West—in the Russians than in the Germans."

The Germans have never had a revolution because they lack the faculty for *self-organization*. They are eminently organizable, governable, "a nation which in public affairs has neither the habit nor the will to act against the will of the authorities." Is this due to the essential nature of the Germans or to their history? To both, answers the author, with the approval of the reviewer:

"A people with different inherited characteristics, with a stronger sense for freedom *within* the State (and not only for the freedom *of* the State), would never have had such a history, but a happier one. Every people has not only the government, but the political structure, which it deserves."

These critical reflections will, the reviewer opines, give offence to many "convinced of the unsurpass-

able excellence of our special type and the inferiority of all democratic humanity." The main proof of the unsurpassable excellence of the Monarchic-Conservative State is its greater power in relation to other States. A State, according to Bismarck, "must lose power in the degree in which its internal structure inclines towards the Left." Only a State strictly governed on the principle of authority like the German possessed, he thought, the capacity to carry out great tasks in the world. "Sad experiences," says Anschütz, "have shown how wrong he was."

The review ends by saying that what is imperatively necessary is a fundamental recasting of the German political constitution in the democratic sense.

To this review the editor, Hans Delbrück, appends a note:

"We placed the book reviewed above in the hands of a *savant* whose point of view we knew to be nearer to that of the book than our own, and we are glad that the meritorious work has had full justice done it. We cannot, however, refrain from saying how fundamentally our own political outlook differs from that represented above."

A third head on which a difference of principle between England and Germany may be alleged is the conception of the worth and prerogative of the German people entertained by Germans. And here

again is a point on which the same accusation is brought by each side against the other. For it is a stock charge against the English on the German side that they claim to be the *elect nation*. Well, on what data is either accusation based? What do we find when we turn to the utterances of German writers and speakers? We find a volume of self-glorification which is unparalleled, I believe, among any other people. It is not necessary here to give any extensive specimens, since the subject has been treated with documentary illustrations by Dr. Bang in his book already referred to (p. 9) and by Mr. Alexander Gray in his pamphlet, "The Upright Sheaf."

According to the Germans, says the Danish theologian,

> "Germany is not only the strongest nation in the world, but it is also the nation which, without comparison, stands highest in every respect. The Germans are *the* people, the crown of creation. All moral virtues are, in the German, nothing but his natural inborn qualities. All that is noble, good, and beautiful can, therefore, be described as German."*

Anybody who wants confirmation of this assertion may turn to the extracts contained in Dr. Bang's book. Not to repeat here any of those, I may give two chance specimens of the same kind of thing which are before me at this moment. For there is so much of it in current German literature, that

* "Hurrah and Hallelujah," p. 10.

any collection can only give a few utterances out of many thousands. A pastor, Dr. Julius Werner, writing in the *Kreuz-Zeitung* (March 9, 1916), tells us:

"The true Germany is not represented by the German daily press or by life in the great modern cities. Its qualities are its inwardness and truthfulness, its godliness and family spirit. It has the office of a *priest* to perform for the whole world of nations at the altar of genuine humanity. The German spirit is the light in the lighthouse above the tossing sea of world-history."

Or take another specimen:

"Foreigners laugh at us because, following one of our great thinkers and exponents of the Philosophy of Will (Fichte), we have called ourselves an 'elect nation.' We take the reproach as a title of honour and—elect ourselves! The fundamental force enabling us to fulfil our task is faith in the natural destiny of the German people to serve in the hands of the Divine Force as an attempt towards the production of *a higher sort of humanity*."

("Attempt" is good: the Germans are the best God can do so far.) The writer goes on to say that the German people is to break off temporarily all intimate connexion with the rest of the world, in order that, having elaborated its own unique individuality, it may emerge with immense power to do the world good.

"This seclusion is, however, as I have said repeatedly, to be only a temporary one, a *transitional stage* for the German people, through which it comes to its full

strength, its true vocation, as the chief Power among the nations, the governing and organizing principle of the world. For unless Germany passed through this *high school* the Western nations would perish without hope of salvation, in sordid commercialism and the slow phthisis of sophisticated overculture, in psycho-physical enervation and the decay of all power to create and shape—even as Fichte long ago prophesied of the Germans, as the Light of the Nations, saying that if they ceased to exist the world would be plunged into darkness and chaos. We are not, and we do not consider ourselves, an 'elect nation,' but we *elect ourselves* by the fact that we shut ourselves off in order to acquire a stronger and nobler life, having recognized the spirit of Providence, educating the human race, in the nations of the old world, the Greeks and Romans, or, as Lessing did, in that nation which gave itself out to be the elect one—having recognized it, grasped it, and made it our own. This can no longer be construed as presumption in relation to the other peoples, but only as a conscious, legitimate, honest entrance into the vast and mighty stream of evolution, as a putting of ourselves into line with the creative and eternal process of that Nature which is God."*

How such self-valuation may affect the judgment on a moral issue can be seen by the endorsement of the egregious Dr. Labberton's defence of Germany's violation of its treaty obligations in respect of Belgium. Dr. Labberton wrote (in Dutch):

"Although England was *formally* in the right, the new, altered conditions made it actually the duty of

* Heinrich Driesmans in *Die Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung*, May 4, 1916.

Germany to be untrue to the obsolete treaty. . . . Germany stands on a quite abnormally high moral level. That can be seen, for instance, by its present extraordinary achievements, which show an absolute miracle of resolute will, seriousness, and unlimited capacity for sacrifice. Germany is *the sound moral kernel of Europe*, from which ultimately the moral regeneration of our world, sick unto death, must come. Before the duty to this its high moral task, any consideration for the personality of the Belgian State had to fall into the background."

Professor Bülbring, of Bonn, in a letter to the *Kölnische Zeitung*, describes this book as "one of the justest and best books which have appeared abroad about the war," as "a brilliant justification of Germany and a crushing condemnation of England."*

Of course, there are Germans who see the absurdity of this kind of thing and are ashamed of it. But you cannot neglect it as a factor in modern Germany. There is so much of it! The common charge made against Germany, that it wants to impose its *Kultur* upon other nations by force, would, I think, be difficult to substantiate. There does not seem, even among the Pan-Germans, any general desire to interfere in the internal life or political arrangements of other nations—except, of course, peoples like the Poles and Alsatians incorporated in the German State. No doubt, the idea

* *Kölnische Zeitung*, September 27, 1915, evening.

expressed by Geibel, that the whole world must be healed by the characteristic genius of the German people (*das deutsche Wesen*), is an essential part of the consciousness of many Germans. They believe, indeed, that their *Kultur* is something far superior to anything else which has been evolved in the world, that it has absorbed into itself everything that is of worth in any other civilization, ancient or modern. But the idea that they should *force* it upon other nations, outside the circle of Central Europe, I have not met with. Even if some crazy Pan-German has given expression to it, it is certainly not typical. The ordinary idea is rather that when Germany has shown itself sufficiently strong as to be able, if necessary, to defy the whole world (*Weltmacht*), and to put through its will in any part of the world against the opposition of any antagonists (*Weltgeltung*), it will not need to concern itself with the internal affairs of the inferior nations. They will be able to do as they please at home, though in no international question must they ever cross Germany's path. They will, of their own accord, come to the springs of German wisdom and German moral greatness to be healed.*

* "We shall create for ourselves in Europe a strengthened *first* stage for our foreign trade, but, round about this, *further* stages will extend, wherever *Kultur* can be advanced, into the farthest corners of the earth" (*Hamburger Nachrichten*, January 15).

The only direct expression of a desire to interfere in the internal life of other countries I have noted is in a *Socialist* writer who says that one of the great dangers after the war will be the immigration

It has been pointed out by others that this racial gospel is, by a curious irony of history, to a noticeable extent not of German invention. It was largely based in the first instance upon the discredited speculations of the Frenchman, Gobineau, and has been elaborated in the stilted and fantastic vapourings of that ridiculous creature, a product of England, Houston Stewart Chamberlain. Chamberlain has, of course, never been taken seriously by scientific Germany, but his popular vogue has been immense, and even governing circles in Germany are not always distinguished by any high degree of critical intelligence. The Kaiser is said to have been much impressed by Herr Chamberlain's writings before the war, and distributed copies of them broadcast. No doubt it was not difficult to persuade the Germans of their pre-eminent virtue and greatness.

Anyone who has considered the extravagant ex-

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of foreign workmen on a large scale into Germany on account of the more advanced social legislation in that country. The only way in which it can be effectually obviated is by improving the social legislation in *other* countries so as to take away the motive for emigration. Germany will, therefore, in the interests of the German working class, have to use its victory in order to *impose upon the conquered States a system of social legislation after the German pattern.* If after the war the conquered States are not in a position to pay a war indemnity, this does not mean that the manufacturing industry in the enemy countries would not be able to endure the burden of such social legislation. "Our compulsory introduction of social legislation would win us back much of the sympathy we have lost in the public opinion of hostile countries [*sic*], and especially in those classes which are more democratic in standpoint, and amongst which the strongest hatred of us now prevails" (*Die Glocke*, June 24, 1916).

pressions in which German writers and speakers assert their nation's pre-eminence may well be astounded that the Germans should bring against any other nation the charge of thinking itself superior. And if anyone, knowing only the German account of things, turned to the utterances of English writers and speakers, expecting to find something parallel to the German self-laudation, his astonishment would be increased. For he would find nothing on the English side which could be compared to the abundant German material in this kind. We cannot conceive Englishmen talking in the style of the writers and preachers whom Dr. Bang passes in review. Of course, in every nation there is a tendency to think itself the best, to think its own modes of conduct and feeling the norm, and everything foreign more or less of a perversion. Many Frenchmen have a sense that France shows the human spirit at its finest and clearest; a great Italian writer wrote a book called "Del Primato degli Italiani"; citizens of the United States naturally feel that America represents the fullest type of manly democratic freedom; and even the members of the smaller nations are no doubt conscious of particular things in their home tradition which they do not find elsewhere, and which seem to them of peculiar value. The British, an insular people, do not certainly come behind other nations in clinging to what is indigenous, in feeling that it is the com-

fortable and decent and normal thing, whilst everything foreign has something more or less strained and queer and slightly ridiculous about it, so that close contact with foreigners is apt to involve an unnatural effort which in the long run becomes a bore.

If all that Germans meant to charge against the British was that they had this kind of national preference, the charge would be true enough, but it would not prove about the British anything peculiar; and, in England as elsewhere, there are many people of more liberal education who rise above such narrowly national prejudice. But probably what the Germans have rather in mind are expressions in English writers or speakers to the effect that the British Empire is a special instrument of Providence, that the British in mediating Western civilization to Asiatic peoples are fulfilling a Divinely imposed task, etc. Of course, such expressions are to be found, though they seem tame compared with the utterances we have referred to on the German side. And one does not see that they need necessarily carry an objectionable sense. After all, the British have, as a matter of fact, played a considerable part in the world, and have a position to-day which gives them an exceptional influence; religious Englishmen must necessarily feel that such influence ought to be used as a trust from God, that the historical process which

has brought about the existence of this great Power in the world, whatever human frailty and human wickedness have been intermingled in it, has been, as a whole, Divinely guided. It is not a merit, but a defect, when the sense of vocation is absent. The only blameworthy thing is when any nation, in claiming that it has a special vocation, denies that other nations, too, have each their special vocations.

> "God of our fathers, known of old,
> Lord of our far-flung battle-line,
> Beneath whose awful hand we hold
> Dominion over palm and pine."
>
> "For the Lord our God Most High,
> He hath made the deep as dry,
> He hath smote for us a pathway to the ends of all the earth."

There is nothing in such words to exclude the recognition that other peoples—the French, the Russian, the German, the Indian, the Chinese—have their Divinely ordained vocations, and that their fathers as well, in so far as they achieved anything of worth, were led by God. I admit that the Old Testament manner which Rudyard Kipling adopts somewhat lends itself to misconstruction, and I am not sure whether the archaism, effective as it is in a literary way, does not carry in it a germ of insincerity. But it remains true that the religious man, looking back either on his individual past or on the past of his nation, has always read and always will read in it the calling and the hand of God.

The apparent inconsistency between the German extravagance in self-praise and their censure of the English is, as has been said, at first sight staggering. But on closer examination one finds that it is based on a theory. The theory is an odd one. It is, apparently, that you may say practically anything in exaltation of your own nation, you may call it the salt of the earth and the light of the world, the priest of the nations, the sound moral kernel of humanity. You may depict it as the very image of the Suffering Christ, but there is one expression you must not on any account use: you must never say that it is an "elect nation" (*auserwähltes Volk*). An outsider might wonder why there should be anything so specially heinous about that particular epithet; it sounds mild in comparison with what the Germans say about themselves. Never mind that: use that expression, and the German instantly leaps up in horrified indignation. Continually you find a German writer check himself in the full career of an encomium of Germany, to interject, "But you must remember that Germany does not claim to be an *elect* nation," and then go on piling up ascriptions of little less than divinity—just as Herr Driesmans did in the passage cited above. The reason why this term *auserwähltes* is such a shocking one to German ears is because it is the word which the Germans believe that the British habitually use of the British people. They have,

therefore, determined that, whatever it may connote, it is the one word which it is damning to use.

And the humour of the situation is that all the time the term "elect nation" is not one which we English currently use. I dare say instances could be found of an English writer using it here and there of England, in the way in which Rudyard Kipling applies Hebraic phraseology. But I cannot recall at this moment ever having heard any public speaker or found any writer call England an "elect nation." The Germans, in order to show that this is the word the English use of themselves, commonly point to a passage in Milton's "Areopagitica." That is going back a long way! We saw them, to prove England's commercial jealousy, go back twenty years to an article in the *Saturday Review*. Well, here they go back the best part of three hundred! But they have modern evidence, too. It will hardly be believed in England, but it is true, that the Germans gravely support their charge against England by adducing the Anglo-Israelite theory! Many English people know by report that some years ago in certain religious circles, as a small backwash of the Evangelical Movement, a theory was going about, propagated in drawing-rooms by a number of cranks and eccentric old ladies, according to which the English were the lost Ten Tribes of Israel and inherited by birthright all the Old Testament prophecies which pro-

mised glory and power to Ephraim. To Englishmen who have heard the existence of such a notion mentioned in casual conversation it has not been the matter for more than a momentary smile, but in Germany it has created serious and enduring indignation. It is hard for all of us, as has been remarked above, to get the values of things in foreign countries right, but the solemn foolishness which has so often marked German attempts in recent years has brought the element of comic relief into the tragedy of international hatreds.

And while we are on the subject of German attempts to construe the English attitude to life, one may notice that their failure is in part due to the special difficulty which the fact of time and change makes for such attempts. A foreigner is apt to put together in his picture of any nation elements of its past which have ceased to exist side by side with the elements of its modern life. In some points German beliefs about England are not so much absolutely wrong as out of date. It is probable that we make similar mistakes in our ideas about other nations. One may give two instances. Nothing is commoner in German references to England than the statement that the English philosophy of life is "Utilitarian." Now, if this means that British men of business are guided predominantly by the consideration of material profit and loss, it is just as true of them as it is of the business men of

other nations. There are among British business men individuals who have higher aims than the making of money, and there are other individuals for whom the making of money is the main end of life. The same might no doubt be said of German industrialists and shipping magnates. If, on the other hand, it means that in those thinking circles which give philosophical expression to the dominant ideals of the time a utilitarian philosophy is characteristic of England, this was to some considerable extent true in the middle of the nineteenth century, in the generation of Mill and Spencer, but it is not true to-day. If any German ever took the trouble to go through the names of those who hold chairs of Philosophy to-day at the British Universities, and of other influential living writers on ethical theory in England, he would find that thought to-day in England had moved far away from the old Utilitarian presuppositions. All the German talk about English "Utilitarianism" is simply the parrot talk of people who repeat a statement, one from the other, which once was true, but has long ceased to be so. This is more or less excusable in a man like poor old Professor Wundt, in his eighty-fifth year, whose ideas of things may naturally have become fixed some time ago, but it is less excusable in men whose minds ought to have retained sufficient elasticity to take note of new conditions.

Another point on which a current German notion about England has reference to a past state of things is seen in the frequent assertions that Englishmen are more bound by convention than the people of other nations. In answer to the English charge that there is a deficiency of freedom in Germany, Germans are apt to retort that, even if the British have more political freedom, they are in bondage to social custom to an unparalleled degree. No one in England dares to live as he judges best; his life is dominated by a narrow social code, which makes the English people practically a people of slaves, if not to an autocratic Government, to a more impalpable tyrant, custom. Englishmen are likely to be particularly puzzled by this kind of talk, because, if there is one thing of which we have a pleasant consciousness, it is the easy-going, unconventional, informal character of English life, as compared with the heel-clicking, bowing ceremoniousness and punctilio of Central European manners. But presently one finds that what is in the back of the minds of Germans when they talk in this strain, is the things they have heard about the British Sunday. The idea they have of it belongs to a state of things which has passed away in England, to an age when all over Europe society was more prim and formal than it is now, and they contrast this with what they know in Germany to-day. And from this antiquated idea of the British Sunday

they make a wide generalization as to the state of bondage of the present-day Englishman.

To go back to the question of British and German self-valuation, it is a fact, which no one who looks at the material can deny, that there is a much larger body of self-praise, and a body of more extravagant self-praise, in modern German literature than in modern English literature. But, to be just, one must recognize that the different degree in which self-valuation is expressed does not register with any exactness the degree in which self-complacency exists in the inner consciousness. Where the Englishman has an excessive conviction of his own superiority, it is far less apt to show itself in bragging and gesture than in an imperturbable assumption, which has no need to insist or clamour, but cheerfully and solidly takes its own course, treating all other opinion as a matter of complete indifference. I do not mean that all Englishmen are like this, but am merely describing the kind of excess to which the British temperament, in its less amiable form, is liable. On the other hand, where the German has an excessive conviction of his own superiority, he is acutely conscious of the opinions of others; he wants to be sure that he has made the due impression, that others recognize his superiority as fully as he does himself. The English vice might be more properly described as *pride*, and the German as *vanity*. Hence the pompous de-

meanour, the perfervid rhetoric, the braggadocio, the continued proclamation of Germany's transcendant worth.*

Nor is it only a difference of inherited temperament, but a difference of tradition. Everyone knows for how much the English public-school code of conduct counts in the behaviour of the English upper classes, who again set the tone more or less to English society generally. An Englishman as a boy is likely to have been made to feel that bragging is bad form. Again, what saves him from extravagant talk such as the Germans indulge in is largely a cooler intelligence, a keener sense of the ridiculous; the German has less of such a natural prophylactic against making a fool of himself.

Lastly, with regard to the utterances of German writers and speakers during the war, we must take account of the different circumstances of England and Germany. It has been a great thing for England that it has been fighting as one in a group of Allies. Never before, perhaps, has the English people been brought so close to some of its European neighbours, and the tendency of the war has been to correct, and not to accentuate, our self-complacent insularity. We have had to learn much of the art of war from the French, and have been

* "When the question is raised, as it so often is, why Germans are so little loved abroad, one of the answers is because they are addicted to a sort of braggadocio (*Grossmäuligkeit*) which is far removed from any sense of reality or fact" (*Die Hilfe*, July 8, 1915).

moved by the example of their magnificent spirit, as of the finest-tempered steel; our admiration has largely been diverted from ourselves to the stubborn bravery of the Belgians, the lovable naturalness and self-sacrificing heroism of the Russians, the persevering scientific struggle of the Italians with the difficulties of mountain warfare. It would have been a different thing if *we* had been standing alone against the world. We hardly realize probably the effect upon the mind of a nation like Germany when it stands alone—for the Turks, Bulgarians, Austrians and Hungarians are in the position rather of vassals than companions, and can hardly in the consciousness of the Germans take away the feeling of solitariness. The consequence is an enormous mental strain which easily takes the form of exaggerated self-laudation, violent assertions of strength to hold out. The utterances collected by Dr. Bang in his book are largely not the utterances of men in a normal frame of mind but of men speaking in this state of unnatural tension. Had England ever been foolish enough to provoke the whole world against itself, we might possibly have found in England attempts to work up the feeling of the unique greatness and goodness of our own people which to-day there is happily no reason to expect.

CHAPTER VII

PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

We have tried to look at the people with whom we are fighting, to understand their temper. But we cannot, still in the midst of the huge struggle, look with any merely academic interest; our thought must inevitably turn all through our inquiry to consider how it all bears upon our forecast of the future, upon the problem of our own action.

There are, I suppose, two main questions always confronting us:

1. Can we ultimately beat the Germans? And by "beat the Germans" one means, in this connexion, so far defeat, break up, and destroy their armies, that Germany is obliged to accept that settlement of the world, which in the judgment of ourselves and our Allies is the best settlement.

2. Supposing we can beat the Germans, ought we —*i.e.*, both from the point of view of what is morally right and of our own interests—to prosecute the war, if Germany is willing to come to terms on the basis of a "peace without victory," a peace which would give us what we judge to be desirable on

certain points only, and on other points would allow Germany to have its will in a way which we judge undesirable ?

One may point out that the second question cannot come up at all unless we answer the first question by Yes. For if we decide that we *cannot* beat the Germans, it is obvious that a " peace without victory " is the best we can hope for, and to go on fighting for a victory we can never gain is to pour out blood and treasure to no purpose.

Now, as to the question whether we can beat the Germans, I do not propose to argue. For most of us the assurance of our chiefs, political, naval, and military, who have before them a multitude of data inaccessible to the ordinary man, that we *can*, if we endure, must suffice. And even the ordinary man, looking round upon what he can see of the situation, may take note of things which make the assurance seem reasonable. For if one thing is certain, it is that the potential resources on the side of the Allies are enormously greater than on those of the enemy. Supposing the conflict protracted long enough to allow of these potential resources being brought to bear, the enemy can have a chance of winning, only if he has on his side so vast a superiority in some peculiar direction as to outweigh his inferiority in resources—a superiority in *moral*, in strategical ability, in organization. But in none of these respects do our enemies now seem to show any

superiority to ourselves. There seems substantial evidence that the *moral* of their armies in the West has become of late markedly inferior to that of our own men; as to strategical ability, no doubt we have made some big mistakes in the course of the war, but so has the enemy; and in the matter of organization, we are told that a closer inspection of the German Government's efforts to organize the food-supply does not give a particularly high idea of its organizing capacity: on the other hand, our military leaders have learnt a good deal since August, 1914, about the handling of large forces.

One thing, indeed, may be pointed to which in itself is calculated to give us encouragement, and that is the extraordinarily bad reasons which are habitually given by the Germans for their professed confidence. "Our certainty," the German *Frankfurter Zeitung* wrote the other day with engaging naïveté, "is based on our own self-confidence, and fed especially by our belief in the absolute trustworthiness of our communiqués." Nothing need be said here as to the Germans' belief in the absolute trustworthiness of their own communiqués—not only because people outside Germany can hardly be expected to have this childlike faith, but because even if the German communiqués were true every word, that would not, I think, affect the data on which the confidence of the Allies is based. The other ground given by the *Frankfurter Zeitung* for

the German assurance of victory—"our self-confidence"—is actually and really the one most commonly put forward in Germany. In all seriousness German writers and speakers habitually declare that Germany must win because its will, its *Wille zum Siege*, is inflexible, because its soldiers are heroes, and so on. It can give us nothing but encouragement to hear that our enemy's assurance has no more solid ground. It may be true that the German will to continue the conflict will go on as long as the physical conditions which make it possible are present, and that the German soldiers have shown signal courage. But these factors are not peculiar to the Germans. The mode in which the Germans speak as if German soldiers in some peculiar way were *Helden* can only provoke a smile in the readers of German war literature, and ultimately boredom at its stereotyped repetition. However great individual courage the units in the great German war-machine may have shown, more heroic figures in history will always be the soldiers of that little nation who, in August, 1914, with but scanty military training, dared to bar the road against the great German war-machine and bore the first brunt of it—figures like those of the citizen-soldiers who centuries ago confronted the world-conquering hosts of Persia. This will to conquer may be taken as a constant factor in all the belligerent groups so long as it is physically possible to go on fighting, and in

all of them the will is strictly circumscribed by physical conditions. The way the Germans talk is like nothing so much as the parody of a novel I remember once reading years ago—by Bret Harte, I think. The hero suffered from consumption; but after both his lungs were completely gone he continued to live an active life for two years by sheer strength of will.

We may take, then, in this place for granted that the question as to whether we *can* beat the Germans is answered by Yes. And this means, that if we like to go on long enough, we can so break up the German armies as to make Germany accept in full any settlement which we and our Allies in concert think reasonable. The second question is: Is it morally right and for our own interests to prosecute the war up to this point?

Let us put the same question in the converse way—Is it desirable that we should stop short of securing what we believe to be reasonable? The hesitation which anyone writing in the safety of home has in dealing with this question comes from the consciousness that the physical pains of war are borne by others than himself, even if (as it is fair to remind some people) those at home are not without their share of pain. What, however, we can do is to point out the conditions of a satisfactory settlement, it being understood that to stop short of that, to acquiesce in a settlement which we

believe to be in part unsatisfactory, may mean worse trouble later on than the completion of our task would mean now. We can show the real facts of the situation, and if they necessitate suffering either now or later on, it is no good to seek a way of escape by pretending that the conditions are other than they are. What is the settlement which it is reasonable for us to desire ?

The question what that reasonable settlement is which we ought to have in view is too large a one to deal with here except in the most general outline. The two main principles, it is generally agreed, which determine it are *justice* and *security*. The first principle prescribes that, as far as possible, where the violence of the past has led to the world being tied up to-day in contorted and uncomfortable arrangements, by which nationalities or fragments of nationalities are prevented from living their natural life by subjection to some alien rule, that state of things should be put an end to. We have here the principle of Nationality which the Entente Powers have written large upon their programme. It does not, of course, mean that Nationality is determined necessarily by common descent or common language, but that where there is any population sufficiently large, with such a common body of traditions as to constitute national consciousness, that population is to have the government it desires. No reasonable person wants to

tear the Alsatians of German descent from the German Empire, unless by their traditions they feel themselves French and want to be French:* no reasonable person wants to tear the Czecho-Slovaks

* Even the Social Democrat "Minority" hardens itself (or did recently) against the suggestion (put forward by a minority amongst the French Socialists) that Alsace-Lorraine should be allowed to determine its own destiny. The *Vorwärts* called such a plan a "spongy (*schwammige*) compromise" (January 9, 1916).

With regard to the views of the Social Democrat "Majority," we may quote Comrade Wolfgang Heine: "It is noteworthy that the French resolution used for the conquest of Alsace-Lorraine the phrase which spoke of *the right of nations to determine their own lot.* Now, in the *first* place, this phrase is misapplied, since the Alsatians are not of French speech and nationality. *Secondly*, the principle in this wide generality is nonsense, since the logical conclusion would be to give to the population of the frontier districts the right of skipping about, now to the one side, now to the other, according to their caprice. *Thirdly*, the French Socialist Congress is for giving the inhabitants of the *Reichslande* (the German official name for Alsace-Lorraine) the right of decision after Alsace-Lorraine has been conquered by French arms. That would be a nice freedom of decision indeed, under the pressure of the victorious French bayonets! One need not say that a plébiscite under German sovereignty would equally have no meaning. That only proves, however, the insincerity of the whole desire for a fundamental decision under such conditions. Do the French hope to present to the world of German Socialists a comedy of this kind as the maintenance of democratic principles? This question is justified, since the resolution of the French Congress dares to declare openly that it sets its hope upon the Minority in the German Reichstag Group and their supporters in the country. In opposition to this one must emphasize that in the combined sitting of the Group and Party Committee in August, 1915, the fundamental principle declaring *against the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine to France in any form* was affirmed by 81 to 14 votes of the Social Democratic members of the Reichstag, and by 31 to 7 votes of the Party Committee. I do not believe that there will ever be any change of view on this question in German Social Democracy" (*Berliner Tageblatt*, January 11, 1916, evening edition).

from the Hapsburg Monarchy, if they prefer to have Home Rule within it; or tear away the Prussian Poles, if they prefer to belong to Prussia rather than to Poland. And everyone recognizes that the principle of Nationality cannot be applied rigidly. The question, for instance, how large a population has to be in order to have a right to independence is one which may leave various doubtful cases. In the best conceivable arrangement of the world there must be a certain number of small groups of people living under an alien Government. But the principle of Nationality could be applied *to a much larger extent* in the new settlement of Europe than it ever has been applied in the past; the Entente Powers believe that to allow, as far as practicable, each people with a national consciousness to have the government it desires would produce a happier state of the world. The principle lays upon the British the obligation to try their hardest to find a solution of the Irish question which would be acceptable to both sections of the people inhabiting that island, one in ideal but unhappily divided in fact. It also obliges them to labour steadily, in the case of the non-European peoples under their rule, to help them to self-government and concede to them progressively more and more autonomy as they advance in political capacity.

The second principle determining the settlement, *security*, prescribes that the menace of German

ambition should be done away, that our children should never have to face the peril and the anguish which the nations threatened by Germany's striving for *Macht* have had to face during the last three years. What constitutes the German peril? Two things, Germany's *power*, and Germany's *will* to use its power to the hurt of its neighbours. If either of these two things were entirely abolished, our security would be absolute. But in the case of no nation can we have absolute security. There is always a possibility, though there may be a low degree of probability—one chance in a hundred—that this or that other nation will have the will to hurt us and the power to hurt us. Again, the less we can have of security of one kind, the more security we want of the other kind. There was, for instance, so small a probability that America would ever want to threaten the vital interests of the British Empire that we regarded the growing power of America upon the seas with equanimity. But in the case of the growth of the German fleet, the Germans before the war were busily diminishing the security constituted by their inability to hurt, without giving us proportionately greater security of the other kind.

Now, the trouble is that in many cases to increase that kind of security which is based upon the inability of another Power to hurt is actually to diminish the security based upon its peaceful intentions. It is true, I suppose, that the ability of France to

hurt Germany was very much diminished by the loss of Alsace-Lorraine—the German Generals who looked at the matter from this angle, who considered simply the strategical strength of a frontier, may have been quite right from that point of view—only the loss of the provinces also enormously increased the will of the French to renew the struggle. Pacifists often lay stress on the impolicy of aggravating the will to hurt. Only they go too far; they argue as if a defective security as to the will of another nation could never be counterbalanced by an increased security as to its inability. They argue as if *every* settlement which left a nation with a hostile will was to be repudiated as an insecure settlement. Of course, every conceivable settlement has some elements of insecurity, and the hostile will subsisting in any nation is undoubtedly an element of insecurity. But where there is likely in any case to be more or less will in a particular nation to upset a settlement, it does not follow that it is not the best course to increase the security founded on that nation's inability, even if its hostile will be thereby made some degrees more intense. If Germany had not adopted so frantic a foreign policy, provoking England at the same time as France and Russia, it may well be that Germany's possession of Alsace-Lorraine would really have enabled her to make France's hostile will of no effect, and that will might in the course of generations have died away.

German writers sometimes argue that such and such a thing is necessary for Germany's security, as if all the world ought to feel happy so long as Germany is safe. But that Germany should be left at the peace in such a position that the vital interests of England depend upon Germany's good-will is not a solution of the conflict, which any British statesman would dare to recommend, even if to reduce Germany's power for offence intensified Germany's ill-will. We can see at this point that our future action might in two opposite ways lead to results we did not wish—if it took disproportionate account of either of these two sorts of security and neglected the other. If, on the one hand, we are concerned simply to annihilate the power of Germany, we may inflict upon Germany real injustice, and thus perpetuate Germany's evil will at an intensity which would constitute a permanent danger to us—that is to say, do very much as the Germans did in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine. Or we may be so concerned not to aggravate Germany's evil will that we shut our eyes to the fact of the evil will's existence, and leave Germany with the power to make the venture over again. There are always people trying to twist our course towards Scylla and people trying to twist it toward Charybdis.

The danger of inflicting injustice upon Germany is especially connected with our economic measures. Shortly stated, the formula to describe our aim

ought surely to be—firm limits to be set to the power which Germany has abused, but no unnecessary injury inflicted upon the economic well-being of the German people. It can hardly be denied, I think, that in some quarters in England expressions have been used as to a future trade boycott of Germany, etc., which have seemed to imply that England wanted to plunge Germany into economic misery. I do not think that such expressions have come from representatives of the British Government. So far as the Germans have tried to convict the British Government of cherishing such intentions, they have mistranslated or torn phrases from their context.* No doubt the matter is complicated by the fact that Germany has used to some extent its economic expansion as a means of stealthy aggression, and has applied for the purposes of "peaceful penetration" methods which the Governments of other countries are quite entitled to check by strong measures. But there is nevertheless a danger that such justified protective measures may pass into vindictive ones. The German rulers are telling their people every day that the Powers against them want to put the economic life of Germany under

* *E.g.*, a sentence of Mr. Runciman's in his speech of January 10, 1916—"What we have the right to demand is that in the recuperation of Germany we should allow nothing to be done which would make either Italy or France or Russia or Great Britain suffer"—was translated in Germany: "What we have the right to demand is that Germany's recuperation shall be hindered—a recuperation by which we and our Allies would only suffer."

permanent disadvantages—prevent the Germans from getting the raw materials needed for their industries, except on terms so unfavourable that they could not compete in a fair field, reduce a whole population of seventy millions to beggary and wretchedness. If we ever wonder why the German people to-day is so stiff in its resistance, in spite of the unspeakable miseries entailed by the war, the chief reason, probably, is because they believe that. That is just a matter of psychological fact, which we have to consider in framing our words and our actions.

"The organization of life is nowhere so perfect as in Germany. . . . By years of long hard labour the German workers have worked their way up, and, even if there is much yet to be done, their labour has not been in vain. German legislation for the protection of workers is a model for all lands. . . . Three millions of workers and employés are organized by trades and professions; a vast system of Societies of Consumers, Friendly Societies, has been developed; millions of marks pass through the hands of working men in these organizations created by themselves. All this is still in flux, in process of development, and can it be a matter of indifference to German workers if this development is thrown into confusion? . . . Just picture what would happen if the war ended unhappily! The German State would be torn asunder, divided into so many portions and condemned to impotence. German commerce and German industry would be in good part ruined. Millions of workers would be breadless. Wages would fall low, the means of life would go up, a

misery such as has never been known would prevail over the German world of labour. Germans would have to leave their homes by hundreds of thousands and seek their bread abroad amongst the haughty victors."*

"If Germany in the present war were to meet with such a military and economic defeat as its enemies desire to inflict upon it, if the German merchant and German merchandise had to disappear from the markets of the world, it would be the German working man who would feel it soonest and feel it most grievously. Employment would diminish. The supply of hands would increase, wages would sink. As a consequence, the organizations would be weakened, their power of resistance would give out, which in its turn would mean increasing economic pressure. Finally, nothing would be left to the German working men except to emigrate in masses—that is, to give up for good all the economic and cultural gains of their home-country and begin over again in a strange place, and this under the most unfavourable conditions, hard pressed by the competition of races beneath them in culture."†

As a matter of fact, there is no reasonable person in England but desires that the German people should be economically prosperous in days to come. Our statesmen have expressly denied with authority that they harbour any purpose to deprive Germany of the necessary conditions of a healthy and vigorous life. If a time of distress and impoverishment awaits Germany after the war, it ought to be made plain to the Germans and to all the world

* *Die Hilfe*, April 27, 1916, p. 278.

† Wolfgang Heine, in Thimme's "Vom Inneren Frieden des deutschen Volkes," p. 460.

that this is not due to any restrictions artificially imposed by us upon German economic life. This is not the place to discuss exactly what fiscal measures may be necessary for our own protection; the immediate point is only to insist that any measures which go beyond what is really necessary for self-protection will prevent any sure European peace. For it is likely enough that, apart from any will on our part to impoverish Germany, the time immediately after the war will be a pretty black one for that country. It may be that the Pan-Germans are right when they assert that huge indemnities are the only thing which could now save Germany from temporary ruin. The picture drawn in the passages we have just quoted of what will happen in Germany, if Germany is defeated, may be not far from the truth. If so, it would be an idle suggestion from the pacifist side that we could take away Germany's fear of the future, and its consequent determination to go on fighting, by conceding it easy terms. For not even our extremest pacifists have suggested, I think, that we should pay Germany any indemnities. We cannot be under any obligation to save Germany from the inevitable consequences of its own action. We can only see to it that we do not aggravate those consequences by any measures which go beyond self-protection.

But if we might imperil the peace of the future by considering too exclusively the security to be

got by diminishing Germany's power, the peace would be no less imperilled if we stopped short in our work and left Germany still strong enough to try again, and with the will to do so unextinguished. That will is largely fed by self-confidence and hope, and if the war were to end without a real and decisive military defeat for Germany, the Germans might continue to cherish the conviction that they were invincible. So long as that conviction is general in Germany, we may expect the craving for *Macht* to go on, making Germany still a peril. There is no evidence that the conviction of their invincibility has yet departed from the German people. This again is a psychological fact which it is idle to shut one's eyes to in eagerness to get the war concluded. The Allies have frustrated more than one German attempt, they have inflicted some reverses upon Germany—the Battle of the Marne, the Battle of Jutland—they have reduced Germany to great economic straits, but they have not yet defeated the German armies so signally and on so large a scale as to take away the belief that the German military power cannot be broken. "We are unconquerable (*unbesiegbar*)"—it is not only Pan-Germans who declare that; you find it affirmed continually with apparently deep conviction, repeated like a sacred formula of the faith, in the organs of "Moderate" opinion. Till there has been a practical demonstration to the contrary, it

would be no good trying to frame conditions of peace.

Nor, again, would it prove wise in the long run to conceive too narrowly of the task before us. There is a tendency in certain quarters, not as yet influential, to say that when we have driven the Germans out of France and Belgium, we can stop at that; we need not go to any further efforts to change the existing order of things in Austria-Hungary or in the Nearer East. But this is to shut our eyes to the extent to which to-day the whole world is interdependent. It may seem to a short view that British interests are not concerned with what happens in Bohemia or in the countries now under the Turk, but as a matter of fact any part of the world where an iniquitous and oppressive system is left standing will be a centre of unrest which at any moment may be communicated to the whole world. Now, while the order of Europe is temporarily broken up, there is a unique opportunity to clear away many old abuses which have caused trouble in the past, and will, if they are left, go on causing trouble in the future. Now we have an opportunity to make a clean job of it all over Europe and the Nearer East which may not recur. How much of the trouble of Europe during the last century has been because of the festering exasperation which the rule of the Ottoman over non-Turkish peoples, Christian and Mohammedan, is

bound to cause as long as it goes on! To leave such a thing as the Ottoman Empire existing is to leave a permanent breeding-ground for trouble to the nations of Europe. It may seem to complicate our task if it involves a breaking-up of the Ottoman Empire; but if we stop short of that, we only save ourselves trouble now at the cost of greater trouble to ourselves or our children later on. To have proposed the breaking-up of the Ottoman Empire, before the war was brought on us, would have been unjustifiable, because the attempt to do so would almost certainly have provoked a European war; and it may well have seemed that the evils involved in the continuance of the Ottoman Empire were less than the evils involved in a European war. Now, however, that the world, including Turkey, is involved in war, to let slip the opportunity of clearing this incurable relic of barbarism out of the world for good would be a want of resolution which time would visit upon our descendants.

The hope has often been expressed recently that after this war the relations of the peoples of the world to each other may be organized upon such a basis that any nation making an unjustified attack upon any other would be arrested by the combined action of all the rest. Our own Prime Minister has intimated that he shares the hope. The idea it embodies has, of course, the support of a great body of American sentiment. If anything in the direc-

tion of safeguarding international peace by a federation of the world can really be accomplished, we shall all, after the experiences of the last three years, have reason for unbounded thankfulness. At present, as we saw in our first chapter, the idea is looked at askance in Germany, and sometimes a reason is given for looking askance at it which deserves to be examined. It would, German writers say, tend to stereotype the *status quo*, and the *status quo* is not fair to the Germany of to-day, and will be still less fair to the Germany of the future. Change is always going on in the world; nations grow, and their limits become too strait for them. If the nations bound themselves to preserve the arrangement of the world which existed at the beginning of the war, for instance, Germany would be cut off for ever from any chance of expansion, although Germany exhibits already "the greatest amount of power crammed into the smallest room" (Rohrbach). Any arrangement which really makes for peace must not be rigid, but elastic; it must allow for processes of change and growth, and include, therefore, periodical readjustments, which would transfer dominion from an old decaying Power to a young and growing one. One German publicist of some freshness of thought suggests that Europe should accept for the regulation of the future the following principle:

"According to a scale drawn up by an international Commission, consisting of political economists, statisticians, technical experts, landowners, geographers, and geologists, let all the regions of the world not belonging to the European community of States (*i.e.*, all colonies) be divided amongst the European States, the United States of America, the South American States, and other States regarded as civilized, on the principle that every State is assigned a portion in ratio to a figure representing a mean between its population and its technical productiveness, in which partition the fertility and the other technical advantages of the several allotments will be taken into account. This Commission, with a complement of statesmen, philosophers, and theologians (missionaries) will have regularly to take note whether the rules internationally laid down for the treatment of the natives and for a reasonable utilization of the natural resources of the country, according to the standard of scientific knowledge at the time, are properly observed. At definite periods, which will have to be fixed, a new allotment, rectifying inequalities, will take place."*

Certainly, if the writer intended his suggestion to be taken seriously, there is a naïveté about it which may provoke a smile. But there is a real problem which these German writers feel, and which is overlooked if we desire a constitution of the world which would pledge all the Powers to maintain the dominion of European nations in the

* The contributor who signs his articles with a pentogram in *Die Europäische Zeitung* (*Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts-Zeitung*) for November 26, 1916, p. 1508.

tropics as it was in 1914, or as it will be after the conclusion of peace, for all time.

We may well believe that the difficulty will have to be met more effectually than by a periodical reallotment of spheres of dominion. To begin with, when Germans talk about the extension of German rule in tropical countries as the expansion of a growing nation whose limits have become too strait for it, they are using a figure which does not really fit the facts. The extension of German rule in countries where Europeans cannot settle is no expansion of the German nation. If, when we speak of Germany's growth, we mean the growth of its population in numbers, it seems very questionable whether its growth, as a matter of fact, is not coming to a standstill. The fall of the German birth-rate is giving the Germans great concern, and pages are filled with the subject in papers and periodicals devoted to social questions. The question was discussed on February 25, 1916, in the Prussian House of Representatives,* and the debate furnishes the occasion for an article by Naumann himself in *Die Hilfe* (March 2, 1916).

"The Conservative member, Schenck zu Schweinsberg, said:

"'When information was given in Committee that the cases of deliberate abortion which had come, in a single year, to the notice of the authorities, reached the figure of 500,000, we thought at first we had heard wrong. But the figure was correct!'

* *Kreuz-Zeitung*, February 25, 1916, evening.

"In reply to this Von Loebell, the Minister of the Interior, insisted that in the matter of the increase of the population, things wore a still gloomier aspect with our neighbours on the West. That, however, did not prevent the Government seeing that the question was one of primary vital concern for our people, one which in consequence of the destructive world-war, entailing for us the loss of thousands of strong men in the flower of life, had acquired a quite exceptional importance for the future. He continued:

"'We are confronted with an evil which is to be found in *all* strata of the people—not least in the uppermost level of society. It is profoundly regrettable that those who should be our leaders on the upward moral path have utterly failed, and in this matter have set a bad and discreditable example!'

"Most important of all were the statements of fact put before the House by Geheimregierungsrat Dr. Krohne:

"'Since the beginning of the new century, we have witnessed a drop in the birth-rate, whereby in twelve to thirteen years our number of births has sunk from 35 to 27 per thousand inhabitants. Since the beginning of the century, the decline of the birth-rate in our country has proceeded three times as fast as in the preceding twenty-five years. *No civilized nation has hitherto experienced so large a decline in so short a time.* Our annual number of births falls already to-day by 560,000 below that required, if we are to keep up to the figure of 1900. That means that we ought to-day to have two and a half million more inhabitants than we have. What an advantage that would have been in view of the enormous sacrifices of this war! . . . It is true, of course, that our death-rate has diminished too in a very gratifying way; but that does not mean that the danger threatening us is disposed of; it is only

postponed. The diminution of the birth-rate is, unhappily, more rapid than that of the death-rate. . . . The trade in the hateful means for preventing conception has become a public scandal; even the most outlying, the most lonely districts are visited by travellers for the firms concerned, even by female agents. . . . More must and can be done to counteract infant mortality! Even now, every day in Germany eighteen women pay the penalty of death for motherhood.'"

To what startling suggestions the anxiety of the Germans at the decline of the birth-rate may give rise is shown by an article in which the *Kreuz-Zeitung* raises a cry of alarm.* The *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* had published a letter by someone signing herself "Sister M.," urging that every girl should be given the right, on reaching twenty-five years, to have one child born out of wedlock, for which she would receive from the State an annual allowance.

The *Kreuz-Zeitung* fears that the action of the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, in giving prominence to this letter, indicates a fairly wide current of opinion. There is a tendency to-day to raise the demand that illegitimate children should be put, socially and morally, on a level with legitimate. It quotes from an article by one Hermann Kienzl in the *National-Zeitung*, which puts this forward, and concludes: "Woe to the short memory which would like to forget once more, why in the days of war Berlin has been so loudly praised! The praise has been

* March 7, 1916, evening.

gained by the abundance of its children, the *unsifted* abundance!"

If Germany had oversea lands for agricultural settlement it would have no adequate overflow of peasants and working men with which to people them. The men of whom, according to Delbrück, it *has* a superfluity are men of the educated class —technical experts, merchants, planters, doctors, officers. What the colonial politicians want is lands inhabited by non-European peoples, whom these men could be sent out to govern. It is the example of India which stimulates their envy.*

Now that the temperate countries overseas have once been occupied and colonized by other peoples, one does not see how the German people will ever have the chance of begetting new nations over the seas which the English have had. This is due to historical circumstances in the past which cannot be altered now. If there is ever again any considerable emigration from Germany, their descendants in other countries will perforce be lost to the German State. If *Weltmacht* were really the one thing worth having, this loss to Germany would be unrelieved tragedy; but *Weltmacht* is not the only thing worth having, and there is no reason why the Germans who remain in their old European home

* See Delbrück's book "Bismarck's Erbe" and the discussion in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* for January, 1916, between Delbrück and Stapel.

should not become, when they have recuperated from the war, a well-ordered, vigorous, and happy people. If, on the other hand, by Germany's *growth* we mean its growth in riches and energy, in technical skill and industrial efficiency, it is a fallacy to imagine that the only way by which these can find larger scope is by Germany's exercising dominion over a greater number of dark people. It is a fallacy to use with regard to such energy the metaphor of a material quantity pressed together within narrow spatial limits.

The arguments brought forward by some people to prove that we ought to give back to Germany her colonial possessions after the war seem to me fallacious, and there is now good reason for assurance that our Government will not be moved by any of them. To do so would not be to content Germany, but to keep up her appetite for colonial expansion: it would be to restore a condition of things essentially unstable.

If we induced Germans to say plainly why they desired larger empire in the tropics, two reasons, as we saw in Chapter III., are indicated as likely—one, the increase of *Macht* resulting to the German State, power for power's sake: the other, that only so can they have security as to the supply of those raw materials which are produced in the tropics and are necessary to German industry. With regard to the first reason, we may feel fairly easy

in our minds that our unwillingness to see the power of the German State increased so long as Germany remains the Germany of this war, will not be considered by history unreasonable. On the other hand, with regard to the second reason, the German desire does indicate something unsatisfactory in the present state of things.

What is here raised is really the whole question of Imperialism in the tropics. That these countries, capable of producing things useful to the world as a whole, should be left in the exclusive possession of backward peoples unable to develop and distribute their resources, is certainly not to be thought of. On the other hand, the system by which various European nations have marked out great areas of these countries as domains, the products of which may be kept in their own hands to be disposed of as they please, is no doubt open to objection. Great Britain has hitherto administered its tropical dependencies in an international spirit in so far as it has maintained the Open Door in them for the commerce of all nations and steadfastly held to Free Trade. But it may be believed that in the future settlement of the world it will be well to express by some formal international agreement that the tropical countries are not to be governed by Europeans for the particular benefit of their own European State; that the Europeans who administer them shall act as trustees, on the one hand for

the world, in so far as they make their resources available for all peoples equally, and on the other hand for the native inhabitants, in so far as they study their interests and train them to whatever measure of self-government may be ultimately possible for them.

When the Germans express a desire to have their supply of raw materials from the tropics secured to them on fair terms—as fair terms as they would have if they themselves exercised sovereignty in those countries—they are not putting forward any unreasonable demand. That the only way of meeting this demand is to give the Germans actual sovereignty in those countries may be rightly denied. But behind the suggestion which we noted as a naïve one in a German writer is the real truth that no settlement of the world which aims *merely* at safeguarding the map of Europe against change can be permanently satisfactory: no settlement can be satisfactory which does not grapple with the problem of Imperialism in the tropics. It would not be a question of territorial distribution and redistribution only, as the German writer supposed, but of reconsidering the whole presuppositions of Imperialism as it has been hitherto, and fashioning a new order of things in which the administration of a tropical region would not be thought of by each nation as a way by which it might display or increase its own power, but as a task which it accomplished on be-

half of the whole family of civilized peoples. If such a view ever became established in the world, and if the German people still coveted the office, no longer for the sake of *Macht*, nor for the sake of gain, but because of the honour of the burden, then there would seem no reason why the German nation should not, at some future time, with the agreement of the whole concert of States, take part again in the government of the backward parts of the earth—provided always that the German people had by then given sure proof that the evil spirit which has inflamed it in these latter times had been cast clean out of it and left it human-hearted and sane.

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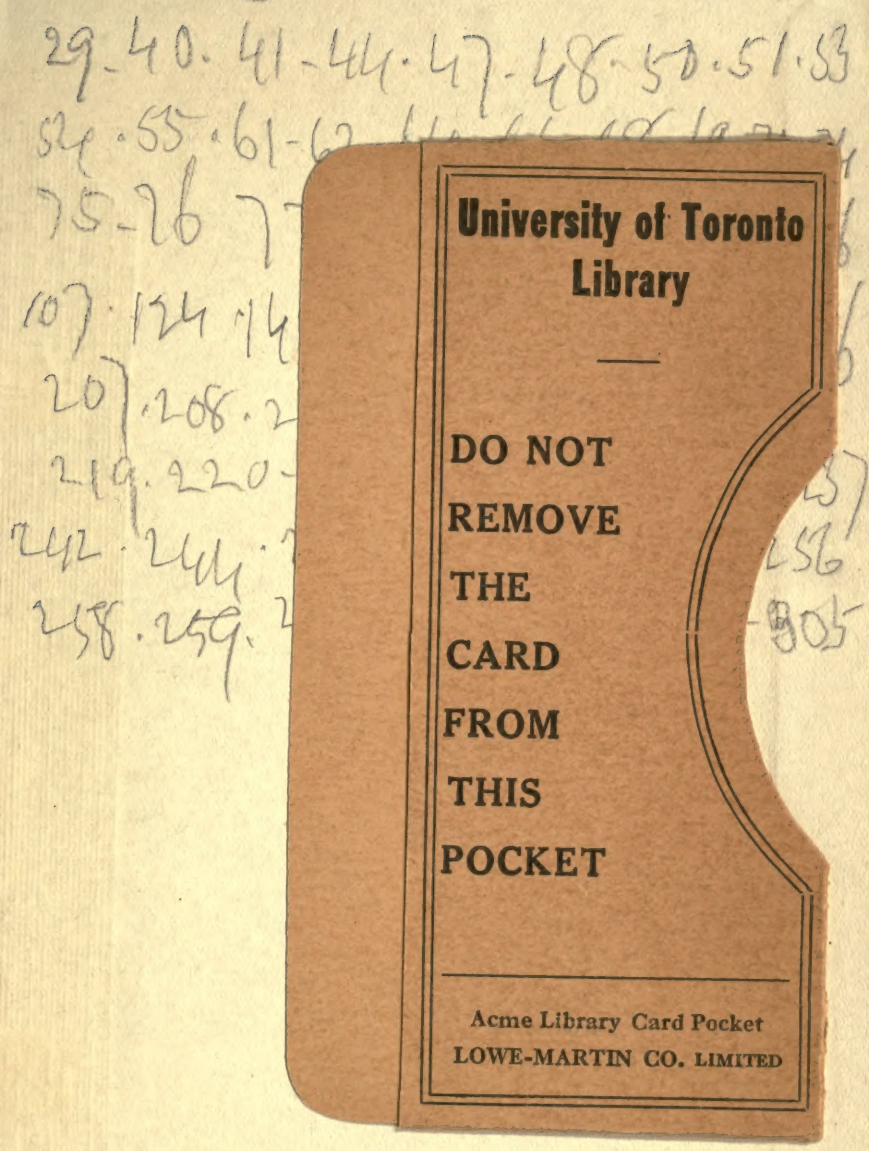
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